

Walesa retracts presidential 'quest'

WARSAW (AP) — Solidarity leader Lech Walesa told reporters Wednesday that he was misunderstood when he said he will run for president, and he meant only that reforms in Poland should be speeded up. Walesa said his "metaphor" to the Polish news agency PAP Tuesday was a warning to the present government to work faster in transforming Poland from a communist to a democratic system. "I confirm," PAP quoted Walesa as saying Tuesday when asked if he would run for president in the next elections. "We have many wise and valuable people in government, holding various posts. However, one must speed up the pace of reforms and destroy the old arrangements." Despite his statement Wednesday, politicians in Poland showed they believe Walesa will run for president, with the only question being when the voting will take place. President Wojciech Jaruzelski's term is not due to end until 1995, but there is a strong possibility that voting will be moved up as part of a general overhaul of the Polish constitution.

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Pakistan puts military on alert

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistan's military leader put his troops on high alert and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government expressed its "deep regret" Wednesday over what it called India's threat of war. General Mirza Aslam Beg, the army chief of staff, reportedly told a meeting of military commanders that Indian Prime Minister V.P. Singh's "threatening statements... call for a high state of preparedness and vigilance to frustrate the designs of the enemy." Singh told the Lok Sabha, or Indian parliament, Tuesday that Pakistan was fomenting separatist violence in India's Jammu-Kashmir state and may "make a limited intervention." Pakistan has denied Indian accusations of aiding secessionists in Jammu-Kashmir.

Saudi Arabia to keep Haj quotas

NICOSIA (R) — Saudi Arabia has said quotas for the annual pilgrimage to Mecca will remain in force, making an Iranian boycott likely for the third year in a row. Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdul Aziz told the Saudi Press Agency Tuesday that "the percentage fixed for pilgrims from each Islamic country still exists because the circumstances behind the decision are still there." He also urged Muslims to respect Saudi laws that bar turning the pilgrimage into a political rally, said the SPA report received in Cyprus.

Sudan frees 10 political prisoners

KHARTOUM (AP) — The military government has released 10 political detainees, including a former minister, union leader and a journalist, informed sources said Wednesday. The sources, who declined to be named, said among those released was Ismail Abaker, housing minister in the cabinet of Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi who was ousted by Omar Hassan Al Bashir June 30. Abaker was detained shortly after the coup. Hashim Mohammad Ahmad, leader of the disbanded engineers' union, and Faisal Mohammad Salim, correspondent for the London-based "Al Arab Al Landana" newspaper were also released, the sources added.

Angola agrees to talks in Portugal

LISBON (AP) — The Angolan government has agreed to start peace talks with Jonas Savimbi's UNITA rebels this month in Portugal, the Angolan state news agency Angop reported Wednesday. In a dispatch released in Lisbon, the agency quoted Angolan Deputy Foreign Minister Venancio de Moura as saying: "Probably this month (and) next month, representatives of the Angolan government and elements of UNITA will meet to discuss the internal problem."

Afghan rebels free Soviet soldier

ISLAMABAD (R) — A Soviet soldier held captive by Afghan rebels for nearly four years has been handed over to Soviet diplomats after Afghan government troops set him free. The official Afghan Bakhtar news agency reported Wednesday that Alexey Rotnovich Echonov was handed to the Soviet embassy in Kabul Tuesday. Echonov was released Sunday during a government operation against rebels north of Kabul.

Romania asks ex-king to postpone visit

BUCHAREST (R) — The Romanian government on Wednesday asked ex-king Michael to postpone his first visit to the country since he was de-throned and sent into exile 42 years ago. The former monarch was due to arrive Thursday from his home in Switzerland for a week-long visit over Easter. In a statement, the government said it had asked him to postpone the trip until after elections on May 20 because "his coming to the country in this period might exacerbate existing conflicts and endanger his personal security."

National charter may take months to draft — Obeidat

AMMAN (J.T.) — The newly-formed Royal Commission to work out a national charter as proposed by His Majesty King Hussein will embark on its task on Saturday and it will take several months to complete its mission, the commission's chairman, Ahmad Obeidat, announced Wednesday.

Interviewed on Jordan Television, Obeidat, a former prime minister, said he would hold contacts with commission members to agree with them on the common ground for discussions and to sound out their views about the main ideas to be included in the proposed charter.

"What is needed from the charter," he added, "is a way to maintain a balance among the various groups in Jordan's society and among the three constitutional powers which form the principal factors in the Kingdom," he said.

The present stage, he added, "requires widening the popular base for true public participation in the decision-making process."

The charter, he said, should clearly reflect Jordan's aspirations and define the true orientation of various groups and lay down criteria that can enhance national identity."

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Belgian hostages could be freed soon, Palestinian group says

BRUSSELS (R) — Remaining members of a Belgian family kidnapped and held hostage by a Palestinian guerrilla group might be freed soon, the group's spokesman said in an interview published Wednesday.

The Fateh Revolutionary Council (FRC) freed Frenchwoman Jacqueline Valente, 31, her Belgian lover Fernand Houtekens, 42, and their two-year-old baby daughter Sophie, born in captivity.

The other four Belgians still held are Houtekens' brother Emmanuel, 46, his sister-in-law Godefieve Kets, 39, and their children Valerie, 18, and Laurent, 19.

All were seized in 1987 from the yacht Silco in the eastern Mediterranean.

"(Negotiations) are proceeding well. I hope we will soon be able to free the family," Walid Khaleel, spokesman for the FRC, told the Belgian daily Le Soir.

The Belgian government has said the negotiations, led by a senior envoy to Lebanon, are at a delicate stage and has declined all comment.

The FRC's main demand has been the freedom of Nasser Said, one of its guerrillas jailed for life for a 1980 attack on a synagogue in the port of Antwerp.

According to Belgian law, Said has the right to plead for a pardon in July, having served 10 years in jail.

Khaled told Le Soir that the release of Said was not the only condition. The FRC also wanted the Belgian government to limit what he called the "activities of Mossad (Israel's secret service) on its territory."

He charged that the FRC had established that the four hostages had worked for Mossad. They had been treated well, but they were legitimate prisoners, he added.

"We are not giving any ultimatum and threatening to execute them if we are not satisfied. We are detaining them, that is all," he said.

The FRC is described by Washington as one of the world's most dangerous terrorist groups, responsible for dozens of raids

that have killed or wounded some 900 people across the world in the past 20 years. Its leader is Sabri Al Banna, also known as Abu Nidal.

Bush welcomes release

In Toronto, visiting U.S. President George Bush Tuesday welcomed the freeing of three European hostages in Lebanon and said Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi deserved credit if he helped arrange the release.

"If, indeed, a person deserves credit for facilitating the releasing of people held against their will — anyone in the world — I would certainly say, fine, give the person credit," Bush said at a news conference here.

The president, in Toronto for talks with Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and a baseball game, said he was not familiar with circumstances surrounding the release of the three hostages.

"We have been working on this case for months," Dumas told reporters late Tuesday after the hostages' arrival. "We alerted a large number of countries, particularly Libya. Our discussions were only state to state, with respect for the principles which are ours."

Previous releases of French hostages by pro-Iranian Lebanese groups prompted charges that France bartered with terrorists, claims France has denied.

U.S. State Department officials welcomed the release but were critical of France's warning words for Qaddafi.

The freed hostages were flown to France and spent the night at a military hospital outside Paris.

Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said "state to state" negotiations gained the release of the three, who were believed to have been held in Libya. Dumas said France "did not speak with the abductors."

Those who criticised the government's praise for Libya for helping to free the three were "being picky," he said.

President Francois Mitterrand had personally thanked Qaddafi for his "determining" role in the releases, and Dumas declared that tense French-Libyan relations would now improve.

Qaddafi has backed Abu Nidal, who along with some of his followers has been convicted of terrorist attacks abroad. Qaddafi

reportedly has allowed Abu Nidal to live near the Libyan capital of Tripoli. There have also been reports, however, that the Libyans have restricted the movements of Abu Nidal and his lieutenants.

In an editorial Wednesday, the conservative newspaper Le Figaro branded Qaddafi the "real abductor" of the newly freed hostages.

A month ago, France returned to Libya three French-made Mirage jets that had been in France for repairs since 1986. Libya, pressing for delivery of the aircraft, closed its ports to French ships in December.

In its editorial, Le Figaro said: "One imagines that the thankfulness addressed by Roland Dumas to Col. Qaddafi were part of a 'deal' which permitted the end of three years of imprisonment."

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The Independent also found French praise of Libya hard to bear.

"Such rhetoric is nauseating," the newspaper said. "To describe the reversing of a criminal act as high-minded and humanitarian carries realpolitik too far, even by French standards."

The Times also accused France of ignoring Europe's supposedly united front in refusing to deal with groups regarded by the West as terrorists.

"When the British government is accused of lacking in European solidarity... Mrs. Thatcher will be entitled to shout 'Tripoli' at any Frenchman who dares criticise her," it said.

Dumas told reporters that French and Belgian authorities remained in contact for the release of the four.

Qaddafi said Tuesday that the Abu Nidal group was "distancing" itself from its terrorist reputation by releasing the hostages, Libyan News Agency (JANA) reported.

British newspapers, insisting that Mirage jets were exchanged for three European hostages freed in Lebanon, Wednesday accused France of "nauseating" hypocrisy in its gratitude to Libya.

The Times said: "Yesterday's identifying spectacle of French ministers groveling before Col. Qaddafi, whose clients had just released three French captives, drives home once again the extent of international hypocrisy on this question."

Qaddafi was praised by France for his "noble and humanitarian" gesture in securing the hostages' freedom.

"Yet if the Libyan government did not sponsor the Fateh Revolutionary Council of Abu Nidal in the first place, the hostage might not have been taken or held for as long as two and a half years," the Times said.

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Iranian paper appeals again for hostages release

NICOSIA (AP) — A Tehran newspaper Wednesday said the release of three Western hostages in Lebanon a day earlier should be a prelude to the release of all hostages as their captivity contradicted Islamic teachings.

The English-language daily Tehran Times, which often reflects the opinions of President Hashemi Rafsanjani, said, "in fact the issue of hostage taking should come to an end for all with no discrimination."

The editorial, excerpted by the official Islamic Republic News Agency, said that Iran was working to get all hostages freed.

Referring to the three Europeans released in Beirut Tuesday, the daily said it hoped their freedom was "a prelude to freedom of all hostages regardless of their nationality, religion and belief."

Frenchwoman Jacqueline Valente, 32, Belgian Fernand Houtekens, 43, and their 2-year-old daughter Sophie-Liberte were flown Tuesday night to Paris after being released to French diplomats earlier in the day by Farah-Revolutionary Council (FRC).

The Libya-backed Palestinian guerrilla group led by Abu Nidal had been holding them for almost two and a half years.

The Tehran Times editorial on the hostages was the third in as many months advocating their release.

"The Islamic Republic has time and again announced its outright opposition to hostage taking as the country finds it contradictory with the Islamic teachings and regards it a serious violation of human relations," the editorial said, according to the IRNA reporter monitored in Nicosia.

The editorial noted that a large number of Muslims held in Israeli jails should be considered hostages since they were imprisoned without due process.

Freedom for hundreds of Kurdish Shi'ite Muslims jailed in Israel has been a repeated demand of all the shadowy groups claiming to hold Western hostages in Lebanon.

The editorial said that the Islamic Republic felt "daybreak" to do all in its power to facilitate the release of hostages, mainly out of human and Islamic considerations.

"Iran therefore is one with and backs up all those who believe in seriously working to get all the hostages, whether Western or from other countries, released as soon as possible," the newspaper said.

Islamic militants boosted in Sudan cabinet reshuffle

CAIRO (R) — Sudanese military ruler Omar Hassan Al Bashir reshuffled his government Tuesday for the first time since he seized power in June, giving two ministerial posts to Muslim fundamentalist politicians.

Bashir named Hussien Abu Saleh, a leading member of the banned Democratic Unionist Party, as housing minister and gave the education brief to Abdalla Mohammad Ahmad, a member of Mahdi's Umma Party.

Both Abu Saleh and Ahmad served as cabinet ministers during the three years of Mahdi's rule.

They are known to be sympathetic to the militant National Islamic Front, which has for years campaigned for the strict implementation of Islamic Sharia Laws.

Arab and Western diplomats say Bashir's junta is also believed to have links with the front, advocating a hardline on rebels fighting the government in the mainly animist and Christian south for nearly seven years.

Abu Saleh has since the overthrow of Jaafar Numeiri in 1985 served as minister of health, education and foreign affairs, while Ahmad held the information and trade jobs under Mahdi.

Bashir named Mohammad Khoghi Salheen, a former information minister and until Tuesday's reshuffle the head of the state news agency, to replace IMID demands.

Ali Shomou as information minister.

Bashir, according to the diplomats, has been at loggerheads with the junta over the past two weeks. He has privately spoken against the junta's policies and complained about the excessive influence of militant Muslims within the government, they said.

Bashir also dismissed Finance Minister Sayed Ali Zaki, naming Abdul Razak Hamdi as his replacement.

Zaki was involved in a publicised row with a junta member in charge of the economy, navy Colonel Salahuddin Karar, over foreign-currency regulations implemented by the military on importers. He argued that the stringent rules were responsible for the acute shortages of consumer goods.

The dismissal of Zaki came nearly six weeks after the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gave Sudan until July 15 to introduce sweeping economic reforms. Sudan owes the fund an estimated \$1.7 billion in arrears and faces possible expulsion from the organisation.

Bashir last month said Sudan, burdened by a \$13 billion foreign debt, a long-running civil war, famine, high inflation and low productivity, would not give in to IMF demands.

France to cut presence in Chad

PARIS (R) — A French army spokesman said Wednesday France was scaling down its military garrison in Chad but denied the move was directly linked to Libya's help in freeing three Western hostages.

The French Sparrowhawk Force, reinforced at the end of March after Chad reported fresh clashes with Libya, will be slimmed from 1,300 men to around 800 by June, the spokesman said.

This is part of a long-term strategy and not directly linked to

the hostages affair," the spokesman said.

"But the fact that Libya is no longer such a threatening force in the area has calmed the situation and has been taken into account."

French hostage Jacqueline Valente, her Belgian lover and their baby daughter were released on Tuesday by their pro-Libyan guerrilla captors. The guerrillas said they were setting them free in response to an appeal by Libyan leader Muammar

Qaddafi's intervention marks a new phase in improving Franco-Libyan ties, dogged for years by Tripoli's military forays into neighbouring Chad, a French colony.

Libya annexed the Aozou Strip in the heart of the Sahara in 1973, leading to a border dispute. France sent more than 2,000 soldiers to Chad in 1986 to help contain a Libyan-backed invasion.

But the Sunnis Muslim countries, which constitute a majority, denounce the Saudi and Iranian, both influential in the Islamic World.

Saudi Arabia severed diplomatic ties with Tehran in April 1988, saying Iran was trying to destabilise the region. The examples cited included the Mecca clashes as well as Iranian threats to Saudi shipping lanes during the Iran-Iraq war.

U.S. forces retain use of Somali bases

MOGADISHU (R) — The United States still has the use of air and naval facilities in Somalia's north port of Berbera despite sweeping cuts in its economic and military aid to the East African country, U.S. officials said.

The officials said in Washington and Mogadishu this week that an agreement signed in 1980 giving the U.S. Air Force and navy free access to Berbera was still valid.

A Defense Department spokeswoman said that although the 10-year agreement expired in January, it would remain valid until either side gave one year's notice to end it.

William Harwood, the director

of the U.S. Information Service in Mogadishu, said the United States had cut off all economic and military aid to Somalia because of what he called President Mohammed Siad Barre's "appalling human rights record."

The government's failure to end the civil war in the north and south of the country is another aggravating factor," another U.S. diplomat in Mogadishu said.

Somali officials refused to comment.

The military base in Berbera was built and used by the Soviet Union during the early 1970s when Siad Barre enjoyed close relations with Moscow.

Washington has paid \$75 million in aid for the use of Berbera, which boasts Africa's longest runway, 4.5 kilometres long and within range of the Gulf.

But last year the United States withheld all economic and military assistance in protest at human rights abuses and cancelled the annual round of joint military exercises.

Iranian MPs demand blood money from Riyadh

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The issue of the hajj is the most contentious between Saudi Arabia and Iran, both influential in the Islamic World.

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French film News in French Documentary News in Hebrew News in Arabic The Robert Guillaume Show Arabic series Jersey '89 News in Arabic Programme cont'd.

FOR FRIDAY

JORDAN TELEVISION Tel: 73111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

16:15 Children programme

16:15 Religious programme

16:15 Friday's prayer

16:15 Sports programme

16:15 Religious seminar

16:15 Feature film Message from Oman Local programme

16:15 Programme review News in Arabic

16:15 Local programme News in Arabic

16:15 Arabic series Arabi

16:15 News summary in Arabic

16:15 Programme cont'd.

16:15 French film News in French

16:15 Documentary News in Hebrew

16:15 News in Arabic

16:15 The Robert Guillaume Show Arabic series Jersey '89 News in Arabic

16:15 Beauty and the Beast

16:15 News in English Quality

16:15 News in English Quality

16:15 News in English Quality

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Queen visits Suweimeh

SOUTH SHUNEH (J.T.) — The little town of Suweimeh in the central Jordan Valley region near the Dead Sea Wednesday visited by Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein who inspected local socio-economic development programme designed to raise the standard of living among the local citizens.

Located some 24 kilometres south of South Shuneh, not far from the Jordan River, the town is inhabited by 224 poor families, many of whom live from cultivating the land.

The Queen, accompanied by Minister of Social Development Abdul Majid Shreideh and Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) Director Inam Al Mutri, inspected The Quality of Life Development Project and was briefed by local officials about the village's needs which included housing, a kindergarten, and public services.

Queen Noor toured several areas, including a cooperative centre which distributes animal feed to the local villagers. She visited a number of homes and took part in planting a number of fruit trees in the fields around homes in the village.

Later, the Queen inspected livestock enclosures set up in the course of The Quality of Life Development Project, which was carried out by NHF in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Quality of Life Development Project was formulated upon the directives of the Queen, following a visit she made to Suweimeh in January 1988.

The project aims at improving the quality of life and raising the standard of living among people living in the underdeveloped areas.

Suweimeh is one of three villages in Jordan to be covered by the project and the first part of the scheme was now carried out in Suweimeh; according to NHF, a total of 12 villages will be included in the plan.

NHF said that a Village Development Fund will be established with support and contributions from the local population to finance community-based de-



Her Majesty the Queen Wednesday visits Suweimeh village (Petra photo)

velopment schemes.

A NHF survey showed that the people of Suweimeh were very

poor, 65 per cent of the female population were illiterate, half the women received no pre-natal or post-natal care and all homes lacked proper water and sanitation facilities.

Jordan invites Arab pharmacists to meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — Pharmacists unions in all Arab countries have been invited to take part in a general conference by Jordanian pharmacists which will be held in Amman on the 2nd of May, according to the conference chairman Abdul Munem Al Khouri.

The five-day ADC march is now scheduled to take place from June 1 to 5 commemorating the 1967 Arab-Israeli war in which Israel "occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Organisers at the ADC said that the change in date had nothing to do with any difference of opinion with the unions.

Funds raised

Abbadie, who is president of the Jordanian Popular Committee for the Support of the Intifada, said that the committee had raised twice as much in the first quarter of 1990 as in the previous two years. He said the committee had raised up to JD 600,000 by the end of March 1990. He added that in the first quarters of 1988 and 1989 only one half of that had been collected.

The figure does not include the amount of money raised during the week-long national fund-raising campaign, which lasted from March 22 through 29.

Abbadie said that he expected the amount raised during the fund-raising week to exceed JD 200,000. "During the first two years of the intifada the committee had raised JD 3 million," Abbadie said.

"We will not be joining the ADC in their march because the aim of the two marches differ," Abbadie told reporters.

He said that the conference, the fifth of its kind, will be organised by the Jordan Pharmacists Association (JPA) under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

"A proposal of boosting pan-Arab pharmaceutical industries to cover the needs of all Arab markets, over a period of four years, will be among the important issues to be taken up at the three-day meetings," Khouri said.

Khouri said in a statement to the Jordan Times that the question of Arab medicine and imports of foreign-made drugs will be reviewed in 38 working papers along with such topics as the rise in the price of medicine, the Arab pharmaceutical industries and the local needs of medicines.

JPA and the Ministry of Health have been at loggerheads over pricing of imported drugs.

JPA says that the problem with pricing began with the devaluation of the dinar in August 1988 and the government decision to raise the price of imported medicine by 35 per cent did not solve the problem.

Statistics available to the Jordan Times indicate that Jordan imported drugs worth JD 18 million in 1988 while production of local pharmaceutical manufacturing companies was worth JD 4.5 million. Both the ministry and the JPA agree that local pharmaceutical industries can increase production to lessen dependence on foreign supplies.

Invitations have gone out to all unions in the Arab World to take part in this important conference expected to come up with important resolutions," Khouri added.

Khouri pointed out that the devaluation of the Jordanian currency, will be on the minds of most Jordanian participants.

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The minister of agriculture addressed the meeting promising to open several agricultural roads within the Tafleih governorate in the course of dealing with the problem of unemployment and the effects of the drought that hit southern Jordan.

Mousher, who was accompanied at the meeting by Vice-President Laila Sharaf and Minister of Agriculture Suleiman Arabyat, said that integrated plans have been prepared to promote the region's economic and touristic life.

Dana region will be covered by the RSCN's programmes which include setting up traditional touristic projects, handicrafts manufacturing, like carpet weaving, and the exploitation of rare plant species in addition to bee breeding projects whose products will be marketed with the help of RSCN.

The Dana area, within the Tafleih governorate, is a rugged terrain where the RSCN has established a wildlife reserve stretching from the outskirts of Tafleih to Wadi Araba and has introduced the ibex among other rare species of animals and plants threatened with extinction.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provided a grant of \$100,000 to assist the RSCN in setting up the Dana Wildlife Reserve to house these species.

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Gaining strength from democracy

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's keynote address Tuesday to the Royal Commission entrusted with drafting the proposed national charter, underlined the need to look towards a brighter future and plan for it effectively and carefully but with an eye to learning lessons from the past. Democratisation is irreversible, the King said, but the road to democracy, our ultimate goal, will be difficult and it becomes evident in the King's address that the idea is to reach a state whereby healthy democracy becomes an irreversible reality. As Jordan is placing its mark on the history of the Middle East by embarking on a road that was bloody for many a nation, an important lesson to learn is to recognise that democracy does not allow for the freedom of speech alone but the freedom to analyse and make conclusions which would contribute to the development of our country. While the Royal Commission is studying ways to draft the guidelines of the future, it is imperative that it also looks back at the past, positive and negative, and analyse our pitfalls, shortcomings and strength. For only by placing the bricks of history in their rightful place can we ever hope to provide our children with solid national structures that can withstand the test of time and the storms of change. Pluralism of political ideology is not just a phrase that depicts elements of democracy, it is also a responsibility of respect for those whose opinions may collide with others. What always has to be taken into account is that the higher interest of the country has at all times to supersede the need to apply a certain ideology or belong to a political party. With respect for others and for the lessons history we will create situations where we in turn will receive respect and gain strength for one democratic process.



JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

AL RA'I and other Arabic daily papers on Wednesday discussed the national charter which is being contemplated to serve as an umbrella for all political groupings and to act as an executive branch for the national constitution. Al Ra'i said that the charter places the Jordanian people at the starting point, and at the threshold of a prosperous future, democratically, socially and economically. King Hussein, said the paper, wants the charter to serve as a second phase of the democracy in Jordan and one that complements the work of the ancestors and forefathers who offered sacrifices and exerted efforts to achieve what is best for this country. The paper said that the charter offers Jordanians the chance to present their views and submit ideas designed to help the country carry on the process of development. By meeting the members of the Royal commission entrusted with the task of preparing the national charter, the King has met with the representatives of the people and elements picked out from various political affiliations whose presence will ensure the success of this new experiment, the paper noted. The paper voiced its best wishes for the commission to achieve its objectives and serve the nation.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily questions a visit to Jordan Wednesday by a delegation representing the United States Senate, and says though Jordanians are not in the habit of turning away visitors, yet they all feel embittered and indignant at Washington's behaviour. Mohammad Naji Amayreh recalls that the United States Senate has just passed a decision, granting Israel \$400 million to help it finance the settlement of Jewish immigrants on occupied Palestinian land; maintain constant supply of arms and financial assistance to the Jewish state, enabling it to perpetuate its occupation of Arab territories and launches a hostile attack on Iraq for acquiring advanced weapons to defend itself against Israel's acts of aggression. The writer notes that President Bush has described Iraq's announcement that it will repel Israel's attacks with all weapons available to it as a shameful declaration, but failed to criticise Israel's continued killing of men, women and children in the occupied Arab territories. We cannot conceal our deep anger over such actions and such behaviour, and we can not but display our deep dissatisfaction with the United States attitude towards the Arab Nation, says Amayreh. What is more, the writer adds, we cannot conceal our total condemnation of the U.S. Senate's decision, supporting Israel's annexation of Arab Jerusalem, regarding it as the united capital of the Jewish state.

Al Dustour daily commented on the national charter as proclaimed to the public by His Majesty King Hussein in a nationwide speech before members of a Royal Commission to shoulder the task. The charter, the paper said, means that the country is embarking on a second stage of its march towards full democracy which started with the election of a Lower House of Parliament. In his address, King Hussein has outlined the significant mission entrusted to the commission members and reviewed the long history of achievements and stages of development in the Kingdom from which, he said, one can take lessons and one can find beacon to light the way ahead, the paper noted. It said that the King has stressed that Jordan has irrevocably been committed to democratic life and to pluralism which can best serve national interests. Through democracy and pluralism the paper added, the country is certain to forge ahead with a greater sense of confidence towards further development.

Why Arabs must oppose immigration of Soviet Jews

By Jonathan Kuttab

PALESTINIAN and Arab resistance to the influx of the Soviet Jewish immigrants has at least three separate and distinct reasons: emotional, ideological, and practical.

The first reaction is an angry emotional rejection of all the efforts to bring Soviet Jews to Palestine at a time when the majority of the Palestinian population is forcibly kept in exile as refugees, stateless people, or otherwise wandering throughout the world. In addition, many others deplore for asserting their national claims. Tens of thousands of Palestinian families are split, with the children, the mother, or the father across the border, only able to come here, if at all, on a temporary visitor's permit. The human misery of these individuals evokes an angry emotional response when others have little or no connection to this land are brought halfway across the world, while its own inhabitants are prevented from returning.

Until the Palestinians' right of return is recognised and exer-

cised, and until at least the humanitarian needs for family reunification are seriously met, there can be no chance that Palestinian resistance to Soviet immigration will end. The cry for justice and equality, and the rejection of discrimination against the local people will not allow it, especially since these new immigrants are only gaining the material advantages of the West, rather than fleeing any clear and present danger of pogrom or oppression.

Countering the Zionist argument

The second objection to this wave of immigration comes from an ideological basis which has always found fault with the Zionist movement. At its roots, Zionism is a response to anti-Semitism which is both dangerous and defeatist. It states that Jews cannot and will not be safe anywhere in the world except in the state of Israel. As such, Zionists await, and may even welcome, disaster to befall Jews so that they will be driven, if they are not already convinced, to leave the Gentile world and come and live in Israel.

The famine in Ethiopia was seized upon as a great opportunity by the state of Israel to bring Ethiopian Jews here. The liberalisation of policies in the Soviet Union, together with the closure of doors to the West for the Jews, was welcomed and encouraged by Israeli officials. In fact, one gets the impression that they are almost eager for pogroms and anti-Semitism to occur in order to urge Jews to come here. When ethnic strife between two totally different nationalities broke out in Azerbaijan, Zionists found a further opportunity.

At the ideological level then, Zionism has an ironic, though very logical connection to anti-Semitism. The proper response to anti-Semitism is not the Zionist one, but to fight against anti-Semitism, fight for equality for Jews in their own countries and work against discrimination, rather than to despair and claim that anti-Semitism will always exist, that it is only a matter of time before Jews are massacred in every country in which they live and that the only escape is for them to flee to Palestine before it is too late.

An obstacle to peace

Last, but not least, are the practical considerations for the peace process arising out of the new mass immigration. To the extent that any of the immigrants are settled in East Jerusalem or in the occupied territories, they will constitute additional obstacles to the proposed historical compromise between the Palestinian people and state of Israel, which is roughly the two-state solution. While many details remain to be worked out, it is generally thought that the outlines of such a compromise are for a Palestinian state to be created in the lands occupied in 1967, to live in peace with the state of Israel in which the Zionist dream will be restricted. Housing and settling Jews in the territories that were occupied in 1967 makes that type of compromise that much more difficult and unrealisable.

The protestation of the Israeli government that it does not direct new immigrants to the occupied territories is not credible, since in the present economic situation neither housing nor jobs can be

provided for new immigrants except with heavy government subsidies. These subsidies are available in the West Bank and East Jerusalem to a far greater degree than in Israel itself. In addition, city and town planning for major housing projects is solely at the discretion of Israeli government and no major project can be implemented unless it falls within its vision.

As a subsidiary issue, it is no secret that most individuals in the Israeli "peace camp" are merely "demographic doves" and the urgency of their interest in peace stems primarily from their fear of the Arab demographic ascendancy. To the extent that an additional half a million or a million Jews are introduced into the picture, these individuals and their argument are necessarily weakened and the impetus towards seeking peace with the Palestinians is therefore reduced.

Therefore, from the point of view of seeking peace and a compromise between Palestinians and Israelis, a new wave of Soviet Jewish immigrants into the area, even within Israel's pre-1967 bor-

ders, will be a step backwards for the peace process.

These objections have nothing to do with the right and freedom of Jews and others to leave the Soviet Union. The right of any person to leave his country and return to it is granted by Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Palestinians, more than any other people, value this right, since it is being systematically denied to them. The only issue is that of discrimination, where the right to return to Palestine is granted to Jews and systematically denied to Palestinian Arabs. Once, however, the Palestinian right to return is recognised and implemented, even in a qualified form, Palestinian and Arab resistance to Soviet immigration will disappear. But not before then.

Jonathan Kuttab is a Palestinian lawyer and co-founder of Al Haq human rights organisation. He is a member of the New York, Israel and West Bank Bar Associations. His article is reprinted from Middle East International, London.

Israel destroys Palestinian houses to quell intifada

By Sami Aboudi
Reuter

SURIF, West Bank — Israel has been destroying Palestinian houses as a means of repressing the uprising in the occupied territories. Palestinian and Israeli human rights groups say.

"These figures... raised the assumption that the security forces use the pretext of illegal construction to demolish homes as an additional method of punishment and as a means of exerting pressure," B'tselem wrote.

The Israeli action has hit almost every village in the occupied territories, according to the Palestinian human rights group Al Haq.

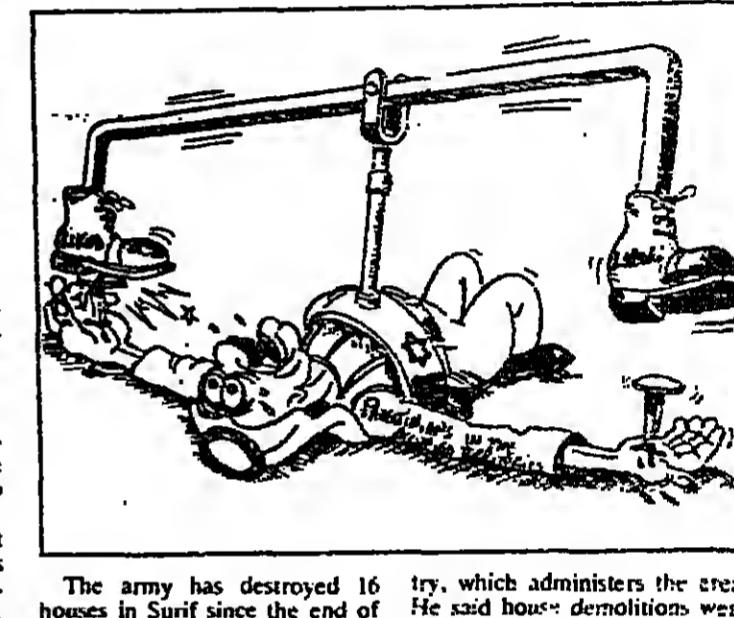
"More than 70 per cent of West Bank and Gaza Strip villages have been affected by house demolitions," said Khalid Batrawi, senior researcher for the West Bank-based group.

Israeli military security regulations in the occupied territories give commanders control over all construction. They can set the terms and ban or halt building.

With a rising Palestinian population and few permits granted for new construction, it is not hard for the army to find illicit buildings.

Israeli security sources admit at least 700 homes built without licences have been bulldozed. But they say the pace of demolition has eased in recent weeks in response to pressure from the United States.

The Israeli human rights group B'tselem, in a report last December,



The army has destroyed 16 houses in Surif since the end of 1987 and villagers say at least 18 more are slated to face the bulldozer.

Al Haq, which has investigated more than 200 house demolitions, said many take place after army patrols spot new buildings during sweeps for Palestinian activists.

Military authorities privately acknowledge demolitions are among an armory of punitive measures such as tax raids and deportation.

They said the civil administration takes the measures to demonstrate Israeli rule over the 1.75 million Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Security sources say military administrators in some areas have privately criticised demolition on the grounds that it recruits more people for the uprising than it deters.

Fair evaluation

To the Editor,

I WOULD like to clarify a few points concerning the article: "Peace of mind missing from Home of Peace," (Jordan Times, March 28, 1990), a terribly negative article that has incited many people to approach me pleading for a fair-re-evaluation of the situation there.

To start with, may I mention that no one at the Home of Peace recognises the people or place in the picture that accompanied the article. Democracy and freedom of speech demand a great sense of responsibility, namely knowing all the facts before passing judgement.

The writer sounds like this was her first visit to an old people's home and her shock at the senility (not madness) of some people is understood. One thing no one seems to understand though is how she did not perceive the fact that only eight nuns achieve the monumental task of caring for approximately eighty five old people. These ceaseless efforts are sustained by prayer and a deep sense of generosity. The Indian sisters of Mother Theresa are little saints willing to wash and clean and feed needy people without the help of electric machines. But Mother Theresa installed a system whereby ladies of society, called co-workers, help out in the care of the old people.

In Jordan, ladies of the high society, who refused to be named, are acting as co-workers, cooking, feeding and bathing the old people in the process. They bring hope and love to the old people and the number is ever increasing. These co-workers coordinate with others around the world on a regional and national basis. Their only aim is to provide shelter and food to the destitute.

Various doctors bave, in the past, volunteered visits to the home, although they would rather do that anonymously. They are called upon in emergency and always arrive promptly.

We cannot deny that the Home of Peace is not at all well-equipped and that it has meagre reserves of food. This burden should sit on the conscience of the public, provided they are aware of the need. The sisters depend totally on prayer for that, so an article handling the situation could stress the angle of need, rather than stress the nightmarish imagery. Yes, old people tend to stink, which is why they need cleaning agents!

Many old people prefer to die in the Home among the nuns they have grown to love. Complaining, on the other hand, is one of the features of old age, when a person loses all his strength, his loved ones and his reason.

Above all, do not call them inmates. This is nowhere near a prison. Rather it is a haven that is in dire need of help, so we call on all the enlightened people of this country to contribute in any way possible to make life in this home more bearable for the solitary men and women who will spend the brief hours left to them in there.

Nelly Lama
Amman

Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



Jordan Times WEEKENDER

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April 12, 1990 A

Al Thagger Society — the only hope for the handicapped children of the south

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The idea behind the Ministry of Labour's decision not to grant work permits for foreign workers (except domestic and farm labour) in Jordan was to give employment opportunities for Jordanians and to stop the flow of hard currency out of the country. In theory, the ministry's policy should work. In practice, however, guest workers do not always sap the country's foreign currency's reserves. Some of them, in fact, give this country much more than what they take.

A case in point is Hester Krol Hester has been working as an airline hostess for Royal Jordanian for a couple of years. A Dutch native, she was able to bring in the equivalent of \$30,000 into the country, all in the service of a good cause. This sum was granted to Al Thagger Society for the Care of the Handicapped in Aqaba, which serves 40 children in the southern region of the kingdom — our subject of discussion.

When Hester came across one of Al Thagger's board of directors and was told about the bad situation of the facilities for the children in Aqaba, she invited her mother from Holland, to visit the centre. It just so happened that her mother, Agnes Poot, had dedicated her life to charity work with the mentally handicapped in Holland. Though now retired, Mrs. Poot continues to work with unfortunate children on voluntary basis, and she was able to help the unfortunate kids in

Aqaba.

"These children hardly had anything except second-hand equipment when I visited the first time last October," Mrs. Poot told the Jordan Times, adding that she had promised the administration of the society to help.

When she returned to Amsterdam, Mrs. Poot contacted the Dutch Foundation of Children's Stamps, a charity organisation that collects \$7 million annually by selling stamps and postcards one-third higher than the actual price. Each October, and for two weeks, sixth grade children go around selling regular stamps and postcards, and the foundation keeps the one-third difference made. The organisation then keeps 50 per cent of the money for the Dutch children, and the rest goes to the needy children in other parts of the world.

Mrs. Poot provided the foundation with the necessary material that Al Thagger society needed, and requested a sum of money that would cover these needs. "It's a very official process," Mrs. Poot commented on the procedure of approval of grants from the Dutch foundation.

Not only did the foundation agree to provide the \$25,000 for Al Thagger Society, but Mrs. Poot established a committee of the Friends of Al Thagger Society in Holland, which includes six special members.

The agreement is that Holland would provide certain equipment, such as the educational material and technical



Agnes Poot presents the president of Al Thagger Centre in Aqaba, Ahmad Sabah, a letter of agreement from the

Dutch charity foundation to donate a sum of \$25,000.

children in the south of Jordan?

"In Holland we have a lot of experience in this field. Now that I'm retired I have more time to help those who need it, especially in Aqaba after seeing how hard they (staff at Al Thagger) are working to provide the necessary care for the handicapped children in the city of Aqaba. We appreciate these efforts. In every society, handicapped people belong to the weakest sections. Your work certainly gives these children a much better future and therefore, a much better position in Jordanian society," says the letter from the Dutch foundation to the Aqaba society, accepting to provide the funds.

"Every child has rights to education, development, shelter and care. And special care is needed for handicapped children," she added.

With a reported 350 mentally handicapped children in the south, Al Thagger Society was registered in 1981, but

did not open its centre until 1986, with the help of the General Union for Voluntary Societies (GUVS). But to enable the centre to care for, rehabilitate and provide special education for the 40 children in a proper manner, the society is currently working on a new building that would provide better services, especially that now the Dutch foundation has made life easier for the society to get ahead. The new building is scheduled to finish in September this year in time for the new school year.

We all know how disadvantaged the mentally handicapped children are in our country. It is known how unaccepted they are in our society, while other equipment, such as air-conditioning and a television set would be bought in Jordan. "Via Mrs. Poot, we learnt of the important work that your association is doing for the handicapped children in the city of Aqaba. We appreciate these efforts. In every society, handicapped people belong to the weakest sections. Your work certainly gives these children a much better future and therefore, a much better position in Jordanian society," says the letter from the Dutch foundation to the Aqaba society, accepting to provide the funds.

But why would Mrs. Poot be so interested in helping the mentally handicapped

children in the south of Jordan?

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As Mrs. Poot says: "It is very important to give attention to the families of these children on location, in their homes, and train them to work in the proper manner with their disadvantaged children... This is something Al Thagger Society plans to work on."

The southern region of the Kingdom is already disadvantaged, let alone the situation of the 350 (reported cases) of mentally handicapped children. And Al Thagger is the only centre available in that area to care for these children. If the Jordan Times readers would like to offer any help so that more than 40 children could benefit from the professional services of Al Thagger Society, please contact telephone number (03) 316499, or write to P.O. box 1637, Aqaba.

IN this holy month of Ramadan one is reminded of an Arabian fruit which seems to take its rightful place on the tables of many these days: Dates. But there is a story of how some gifts of dates for the poor in Jordan are finding their way to the medical alcohol factory. According to informed sources, dates which arrived in Jordan this year as gifts from certain Arab countries were stored in unit areas for three months until worms found their way into the little brown pieces of fruit. Faced with dilemma, of how to give the poor dates with worms in them, the government looked for viable options. Usually these type of dates are sold to factories for alcoholic beverages but with the advent of democracy and the emergence of strong Islamic trends in the country, the dates were sold to the medical alcohol factory for JD 1 a tonne. The sources, who insisted on anonymity, maintained that this has been going on for years. Perhaps the representatives of the people could inform donor countries to donate their dates to these factories directly.

A Jordanian citizen, who is also an agent for Aeroflot in Jordan, has signed a contract with the municipality of Moscow and the Central Tourism Hotel there to open an Arab food restaurant with a capital of \$800,000. The restaurant will be able to accommodate as many as 200 people at one time. Decoration and service in the restaurant will reflect Jordanian culture including the dress of the waitresses who will be wearing Jordanian thobes. The same Jordanian citizen had sympathy with the Jordanian embassy there and donated a facsimile machine as well as several telephone sets. Impressed by the generosity of this citizen, the ambassador sent a telegram to his ministry here informing them of this commendable move and furnishing them with the name of the citizen, obviously hoping that the ministry would thank him for his generosity. No. The ministry did not do that. It sent a telegram to the ambassador, with the following five-word question: "Who is so and so?" A relative of the misguided citizen, who also happens to be a senior government official, is joking about the whole matter, saying the gift holds with or without appreciation.

RADIO Jordan English service has dispensed with the services of one of its non-staff employees to cut unnecessary spending. According to sources, who requested anonymity, Sami Kamal, a disc jockey who had his own radio show, was asked to leave his work at the station because he worked longer hours than anybody else and therefore made more money than anybody else. This move comes as part of a policy in several government-owned institutions to fire workers who did not have a contract and to depend more on the abilities of their own staff who have been enjoying a measly monthly salary rather than being paid per hour of work or project. Sami Kamal was not available for comment.

DISTRIBUTORS of drip irrigation systems in Jordan are facing a problem that they believe could be made into an excellent episode of "That's Incredible." The Jordanian customs law allows for tax exemption only on complete drip irrigation systems but not on its constituent parts. So importers of this system imported complete systems and were exempted, only to be told later that these systems could not be sold as separate parts. According to one importer, the full system includes mainlines, driplines, drippers, valves and fittings. Most of these elements are produced locally but the local production of driplines and drippers "is not sufficient for the local market." What the importers are calling for is that drip irrigation parts be exempted as is the case with all other agricultural production material. Encourage local industry is the motto, many national enthusiasts say. Well, importers propose that customs tax be placed on the valves and fittings of this system because they can be used for purposes other than agriculture and maintain that the difference in freight which they estimate at 20 per cent is enough incentive. While this problem is finding its way from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Prime Ministry to the Customs Department and to all those concerned, farmers are not planting their crops and are awaiting the verdict of the authority in charge. Finally, if you think the problem is too complicated for you, then just imagine how those who are directly involved feel.

Normeen Marad

THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK

Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees all the others

— Sir Winston Churchill, British statesman (1874-1965).

Never trust a man who speaks well of everybody

— John Charlton Collins, English literary critic (1848-1933).

The greater the difficulty, the greater the glory

— Cicero, Roman statesman-philosopher (106 B.C.-43 B.C.).

Punctuation — a real burden

By Haya Hussein

IN a headline entitled "Egypt — heading for Elections?" (April 5-6, page 4) I took the hyphenated words to suggest a new verb — what a word-architect of an editor! As it turns out, that wasn't a hyphen — a dash, rather, and it should have read: "Egypt — (dash) heading towards elections?"

What a burden punctuation is. Omit a semi-colon and someone will scream that you've insulted them. Omit a comma and you're misquoting.

But punctuation is no longer the basic set of rules for any art-form; it has instead become a set of tools with which one interprets art. In written art form, punctuation is as much a part of content as is allegory, symbolism or imagery.

In certain visual art-forms like film-making, punctuation offers further contextual or structural interpretation. It may be the lifeline of the flow of images. I refer to the type of film that has some literary powers. Such films often lack a convincing, lifelike plot and usually nothing much happens. In these cases, directors rely on scenery, facial

expressions, movement and conversations that are rarely complete or constantly interrupted.

That, I think, is where punctuation may play its role: In its series of interruptions (dots, dashes or commas); in its expansion of visual detail (colons, dashes); in its tacit but suggestive imagery (ellipsis); in its approach to the unknown, undetermined (question mark); in its brief side-imaging (brackets).

I don't know. Perhaps someone, someday, will write his or her Ph.D. thesis on visual punctuation in the films of, say, Palestinian director Michel Khleifi. Until then, we have to convince ourselves that punctuation matters.

Nonsense, after all, if artistically conveyed in any art-form makes sense. So does distortion. The irrelevant is itself an extension of how we see the world. Punctuation then, being another tool, cannot be immune to literal interpretation, even if we only mean to use it conservatively.

In one Michel Khleifi's films, the conversations between a couple are remarkably toneless or "dull" as described by some people. I take that to mean one thing: The director wasn't using speech marks.

LETTERS

Dear Sir,

When I was a researcher for the writer of a book concerning the Middle East in the early fifties, I visited your country, and enjoyed a most pleasant holiday.

Now I am a published writer of many decades who pursues postcard collecting as a hobby, and I thought perhaps you would have letters, from time to time, from people like me, on your editorial page called something like "Letters to the Editor."

I trade postcards with people in countries all over the globe, including Pakistan, Zimbabwe and Pitcairn Island. I would like to trade postcards with collectors in your country.

I will trade card for card, any interesting card of Jordan. If anyone is interested in receiving a postcard with a photograph of ex-President Reagan and a postcard with a map of Texas, I will trade same for a picture of King Hussein on a postcard and a postcard of the map of Jordan!

I hope Jordanians will write to me and trade cards, and I shall answer every letter.

Sincerely,

Elaine Anhalt-Stuart
3700 Wakeforest, #11
Houston, Texas 77056
U.S.A.

Pen pals

Dear Sir,

I am writing to ask if you would be kind enough to print my name and address in your newspaper in order to obtain pen pals in your country. I am 21 years of age and I will answer any letter I receive. I collect both stamps and postcards and I would love to swap these with anyone who is willing. Thank you and I hope that you can grant my request.

Mark Farley
P.O. Box : 10238
Adelaide Street
Brisbane
Queensland 4000
Australia.

Dear Sir,

I would like to have pen-friends from Jordan. Please publish my name and address in your newspaper.

Interested persons, both male and female can write to me. There is no age preference.

I'm a man of 36 years, a teacher of English and business studies.

My hobbies are music, sports, reading, writing, photography and travelling.

Thanks in advance

Richmond A. Boeteng
P.M.B. 209
Serekunda P.O.
Banjul, Gambia
West Africa.

JTV channel 2 weekly preview

Thursday April, 12

8:30 The Bill Cosby Show

Rudy protests the hard rules of the house and strikes a deal with her parents.

9:10 Basketball

10:00 News in English



Catherine Ross

10:20 Feature Film
Tell Them Willie Boy Is Here
Starring Robert Redford and Katharine Ross

The American Indian ordeal at the hands of the white man who was bent on changing their ways.

Friday April, 13

8:30 The Robert Guillaume Show

Together Again

9:10 Beauty and the Beast

In part two, Vincent struggles to save a pregnant Katherine from her kidnappers.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Quincy Dead And Alive

The mysterious story of a dead man who is not completely dead.

Saturday April, 14

8:30 Surgical Spirit

Surgery is a serious profession and Sheila Sabatini will not have fun made at it. So when her eminent colleague Mr. Hopa-Wynna appears in a comic photograph in a national newspaper her hackles rise at once.

9:00 Encounter

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film
Death of a Gunfighter
Starring Richard Widmark and Lena Horne

A western in which Widmark plays a small-town marshal with a dozen killings to his name. He falls out of favour with a group of local city councillors, all of whom want him removed. But how?

Sunday April, 15

8:30 Who's the Boss

Tony decides to give his daughter, Samantha, the ultimate incentive to go to college

9:10 Without Borders

10:00 News in English

Episodio five of the continuing story of Robert Louis Stevenson's life in the Pacific. Matala makes peace offering to his adversary, but alas, the civil war engulfs them all.

Tuesday April, 17

8:30 Charles in Charge

Charles 'tries hard', very hard, to make himself an example to the kids.

9:10 Scientific legacy of the Arab World.

The Australian outback is one of the last frontiers on Earth. Where the fierce heat, the relentless distance between small pockets of civilisation and the loneliness stretch human endurance to breaking point. This vast spectacular landscape is the setting of a chilling story of suspense "Alice to Nowhere."



A scene from Beauty and the Beast Friday at 9:10

10:20 Agatha Christie's Poirot
The Veiled Lady

Another multiple mystery that yields to Poirot's wit and mental powers.

Monday April, 16

8:30 Empty Nest

9:10 FIFA

10:00 News in English

10:20 Tuisitala (Episode 5 of 6)

Episodio five of the continuing story of Robert Louis Stevenson's life in the Pacific. Matala makes peace offering to his adversary, but alas, the civil war engulfs them all.

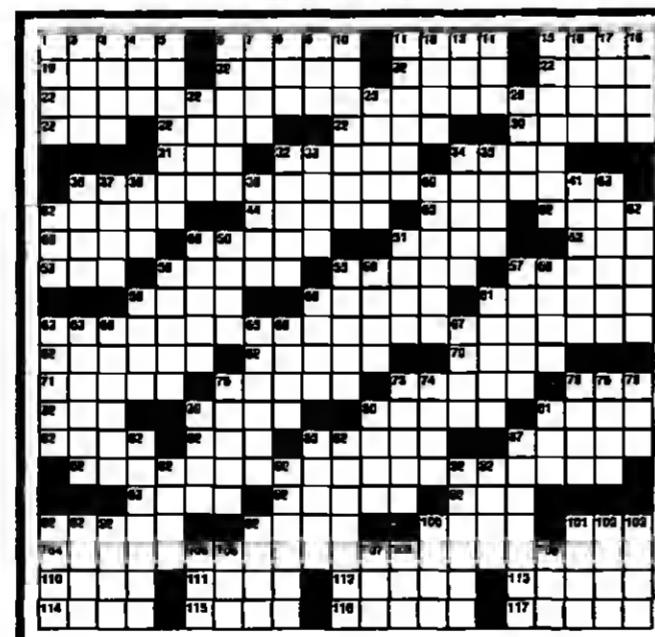
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Edited by Herb Ettinger



Last Week's Cryptogram

- Does very nostalgic music remind us how things never really were?
- Did refusal of his marriage proposal mean that dear young attorney lost his first suit?
- Peach farmer gave old grandfather clock to kind mechanic for free repair on his van.
- Former cold climate gave frigid nidget a frigid right digit.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. HUNT HOGAL MESSONI MOSSNAY
GLBBALY GLZUFC GI GUA UG E SIL
FARNZ SILDAT CODA SOLD. —By Lee Sherry

2. CKL YADTE EBWW OCHHKWL HSJEWYHSK
JYSA DB ODMO JTCAADB TCSBYWY. —By Earl Ireland

3. LEKICLOR YOKBZ IBUB LBAFK MFPUKKAKC
ITEOZ TEbz BREAK LEG TKYMPKKG
BUMPPY. —By Ed Hoddlestone

4. NU SRDOMORK RATE US DRY OYLMINT
BTTYE LUIKBOYA BODT. —By Norton Rhodes

SOLUTIONS OF
LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

Ramadan is 'kareem' for food merchants

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Food, food, everywhere but not a bit to eat before 6 p.m. During the Holy Month of Ramadan, which began two weeks ago, most of the world's 750 million Muslims fast from sunrise to dawn in order to feel what it is like for those who are hungry and poor and in observance with one of the main pillars of the faith.

While many people who fast frequently have stomach aches and feel nauseous after eating too much once they break their fast, many others are moderate in their food intake and are thus more likely to be following the essence of the whole exercise.

Most Jordanians eat meals that vary from "fast breakers" like soup, salad, stuffed lamb, chicken and other goodies to green onions, tomatoes, beans and bread.

The rise in prices of many consumer products and the stagnation of the country's economy have left a visible effect on both consumer and food prices.

Many merchants fear that sales of clothes, toys and household gifts at the end of Ramadan on the eve of 'Eid Al Fitr will be less than in previous years because of the decreased buying power of the dinar, the absence of expatriates so early in the year and the "bad" weather.

The Sparta jail is filled with women when the six wives of bigamist James Jeffson, visit him bearing gifts of food only to become suspects when the man dies of poisoning.

"We used to sell a kilo of lamb meat, cleaned, cooked and garnished with nuts and all the other trimmings for JD 6.5. This year we sell it at JD 7.5, which is a minimal increase," said the manager of Ata Ali, Shmeisani. He added that snobar, used for garnishing lamb meat and stuffings as well as sweets, had gone up by only five per cent and that his once thriving shop was "in the red" because of the increase in prices of certain "basic" ingre-



Home delivery food merchants are doing well in Ramadan despite rise in prices of many consumer goods.

dients for pastries and Middle Eastern sweets.

"Pistachios have gone from JD 0.82 to JD 4.6 a kilo; fresh cream from JD 1.6 to JD 3.1," the manager said.

"Now the government has put a tax on my terrace and is asking me to pay JD 20 for every square metra and I only use the terrace four months a year," he added.

His competitor, Jinini, down the street, had a different story to tell: its sales are up by up to 50 per cent.

While the shop, which sells exclusively Middle Eastern sweets, also lamented the increase in prices of "basics" such as snobar, pistachios, cheese etc., it also said that sales this Ramadan were more than satisfactory.

"The butter we use has gone up from JD 12 a kilo to JD 38 a kilo and our cheese from JD 17 a kilo to JD 32. But, as you can see, ai Ramadan is 'kareem' — generous," he said smiling.

This Week in History

FRIDAY, APRIL 13

1868 - British forces under Robert Napier capture Magdala in Ethiopia.

1909 - Army counter-revolution in Constantinople against rule of Mohammedan Union.

1986 - Stampede by Hindu pilgrims kills at least 46 people and injures 39 others at religious festival at banks of Ganges River northeast of New Delhi, India.

1989 - Independent Solidarity trade union in Poland files for registration after seven-year ban.

Thursday, April 12

1945 - U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt dies at age 63, and Harry S. Truman is sworn in as his successor.

1961 - Soviet Union puts first man in space—Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin makes safe landing after one orbit of Earth.

1966 - U.S. bombers carry out their first strikes against North Vietnam.

1987 - Soviet media reports that two cosmonauts walking in space successfully linked space module to their orbital space station Mir.

1989 - Relentless artillery battles rage between Christ-

ians and muslims as Lebanon's civil war enters its 15th year.

Monday, April 16

1942 - India's congress rejects terms of self-government offered by Britain.

1945 - U.S. troops enter Nuremberg, Germany, in World War II.

1947 - Fires and explosions wreck Texas city, Texas, as French freighter loaded with nitrate blows up, leaving eventual death toll of more than 500.

1964 - Nationalist leader Josua Nkomo is placed under restriction in southern Rhodesia.

1970 - Alpine avalanche plunges down on children's sanatorium at Sallanches, France, killing 72 people.

1972 - U.S. Apollo 16 astronauts are launched toward moon from Cape Kennedy, Florida.

1975 - Cambodian government in Phnom Penh asks for truce and offers to yield to Communist forces sweeping into city.

1988 - Commando unit kills Palestine Liberation Organization military commander in Tunis.

The Associated Press

They are refurbishing our heritage

By Sa'ad G. Hattar

YES. Some people may have to steal. They steal to eat. Then they steal to tip. Many steal 10 per cent. I know someone who used to steal 12 to 15 per cent which made him a celebrity amongst the waiters.

Other people steal mosaic floors to decorate their homes, to make them look brighter, authentic and add to them a touch of je ne sais quoi.

The theft last week of a mosaic floor from Qasr Al-Hallabat, an invaluable Islamic retreat on the outskirts of Amman, fell under the second category. The husband dismantled the unique floor and whisked it away to his newly built villa. "Do you think we should place it on the veranda to show it off to our neighbours or use it as a kitchen table?" asked the anxious wife. "I don't think it would fit in the kitchen. Besides, we will have to use a table cover of the same colour shades and support it with stone legs, preferably of the same material," a confident husband replied.

"But we will have to fetch the legs from the Jerash ruins and, perhaps, we can get a corner stone from Petra to complement the setting."

— Yes, darling, but we can never fit all these items in our small kitchen.

— I think we had better rent our villa and go live in one of the desert castles, perhaps, the Mushata retreat; it is near the capital and quite spacious," the husband suggested.

— "No I would rather live in Qasr Al Hallabat. It is fairly preserved and we can refurbish it to include a pool and an alarm system," the wife snapped. The far-fetched planning did not materialise. The next day the couple received a much better offer. A picturesquely solitary confinement with a panoramic view, overlooking a row of neat cells on the right side and the prison's kitchen and wasteyard on the left side.



Cyrano de Bergerac — French season's brightest star

By Marilyn August

Associated Press

PARIS — *Cyrano de Bergerac*, whose long nose and gift of poetic gab make him France's most famous fictional character, is tugging at hearts again, this time on stage and in film in performances by France's two foremost actors.

Nearly 100 years after he was created for the stage, *Cyrano* is being portrayed simultaneously on stage and in cinemas in France. Jean-Paul Belmondo is dazzling audiences at the sold-out Marigny Theatre, while Gerard Depardieu is inducing tears — and laughs — in France's most expensive cinematic production ever.

The film, produced at a cost of \$17 million, opened in France to unanimous critical praise. It will open in the United States in December. Painfully shy and downright ugly, *Cyrano* was a master swordsman with verve and panache who breathed his poetry and passion into the tongue-tied head of a handsome soldier to win the lovely Roxanne.

The classic tale of unrequited love got a modern face lift in 1987 in the American hit film *Roxanne*, starring Steve Martin and Daryl Hannah. Martin played a long-nosed fire chief in a contemporary U.S. small town.

The newest versions are faithful to Edmond Rostand's play set in 17th century France against a background of war between kings fought by swashbuckling gascons like D'Artagnan of the three musketeers.

Written by Rostand in 1897, *Cyrano* is as French as the national anthem. Children study it in school and audiences know the "nose" and "no thank you" tirades by heart.

Yet, it has defied film makers until now because of its alexandrines, iambic lines with six feet that rhyme. Rappeneau and veteran screenwriter Jean-Claude Carrere streamlined the original text, but critics say they sacrificed neither the poetry nor its romantic soul.

***Cyrano* also has endured because its story is timeless. Who has never felt despair**

looking in the mirror or pain upon discovering that the one you love loves another?

"A little Cyrano sleeps in the heart of all of us," Depardieu has told interviewers.

Both Depardieu and Belmondo have received rave reviews from critics in their portrayals of *Cyrano*, considered one of the most difficult roles ever penned.

Depardieu, 41, is France's biggest box-office attraction with 60 films under his belt — and *Cyrano*, is his most brilliant performance ever.

"Cyrano? Bravo," headlined *Le Monde*. "*Cyrano* is fabulous," chimed in the often cynical *Liberation*, another major daily news paper.

The movie was filmed on location in Hungary with 2,000 actors and extras in period costumes, 40 studio sets, 1,000 pikes and muskets. An antre forest was cleared to film the siege of Arras.

Studio Magazine — France's leading film monthly — devoted 20 pages to the film, and described Depardieu as "an actor in a state of

grace."

"Everything in *Cyrano*'s character fits him like a glove," Marc Esposito wrote. "The power, the sensitivity, the arrogance, the complexity, the fragility we sense under his imposing physique, belongs as much to *Cyrano* as to Depardieu."

Jacques Weber, who triumphed in his portrayal of De Guiche, the haughty count also enamored of Roxanne, called Depardieu "a bomb fallen from the moon."

For Belmondo, 56, best-known for his tough-guy roles in fast-paced thrillers, *Cyrano* marks a long-awaited return to his roots as a dramatic actor — and only his second stage appearance in 25 years.

Director Robert Hossein said playing *Cyrano* had long been a secret goal of Belmondo because the actor's father, Paul, used to say the role was the ultimate test for an actor.

"When will you go back to your real profession? I will die without seeing you as *Cyrano*," Belmondo senior would say as his son posted one



Gerard Depardieu (right) plays *Cyrano de Bergerac* in the film version which was directed by Jean-Paul Rappeneau.

box-office smash after another, Hossein recalled.

Paul Belmondo died sever-

al years ago.

"Belmondo is paying off a personal debt (to his father),"

wrote Jean-Pierre Thibaudat in *Liberation*. "If the movies hadn't been invented, he would have been the Coquelin of our times. And Coquelin invented *Cyrano*."

Vietnamese guitar prodigy finds refuge in music

By John Miller

PALAWAN ISLAND, The Philippines — When Tran Vu Hung needs to find a little peace and quiet, he takes his guitar to the rocky beach by the First Asylum Camp on Palawan Island. There, alone at the edge of the turquoise Sulu Sea, he plays the works of 19th-century Polish-born composer Frederic Chopin. For it's in music, and especially Chopin's music, that Tran feels most at home.

Feeling at home has a poignant appeal for Tran, a Vietnamese "boat person" who arrived in the Philippines after five grueling days at sea last May.

With his long, black hair threaded with white, his handsome face focused and hard, it's difficult to believe that Tran Vu Hung is only 25 years old. Hearing him play the guitar only reinforces that disbelief: He is a prodigy, an artist of rare skill and promise, known thus far to few outside the friends and neighbours who have heard him play in this crowded, relentlessly noisy refugee camp.

"I feel it in my gut that he's a great musician," says Victor Rockwell, an American Peace Corps volunteer who works as a teacher near the camp where Tran now lives. Rockwell, an award-winning classical guitarist who studied with some of the most accomplished players in the world, first met Tran while leading a Boy Scout outing. He had no idea then that the intense and energetic young Vietnamese was a gifted musician.

Then he heard Tran play at a birthday party for the local Catholic bishop. "Everybody there was overwhelmed," Rockwell recalls. "They gave him a standing ovation." Rockwell was fascinated by the unorthodox way in which Tran held his guitar and by his creative interpretations of the difficult pieces he played. He was so impressed, in fact, that he gave Tran his own guitar.

Although he is quick to point out that Tran still "makes lots of mistakes," Rockwell has no doubt that the young Vietnamese possesses and extraordinary talent. "I've worked closely with some of the best guitarists in the United States," he says, "and Tran is as good as any of them."

Is he in a class with world-famous guitarists such as Julian Bream, John Williams or Andres Segovia? Not yet,

the West, he explains, adding that he plans to go to Houston, Texas, where an aunt has already settled.

But it's an open question whether he'll be able to leave the camp where he now waits. Tran, like tens of thousands of other Vietnamese who landed in South East Asian countries in the past year, has no guarantee that he will be judged a true refugee — as opposed to an economic refugee — under a new screening procedure instituted by potential host countries. It used to be that Western "resettlement" countries like the United States, as well as "first asylum" countries like the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia, considered anyone fleeing Vietnam to be a political refugee. This is no longer the case.

Some 6,000 of the 9,500 says Rockwell, but in time he could well be. "I don't know if Tran is one in a century, or just maybe one in 10 years. But the point is, in my opinion, this guy is very, very special."

Tran himself is not reluctant to admit that he has a gift, and although he says that he uses the guitar primarily to "understand myself," he is eager to play for appreciative audiences. According to Rockwell, Tran has the kind of arrogance that is common to most great performers. "I like his attitude. He loves playing, and it shows. Tran Vu Hung should be entertaining people," he says.

Tran is largely self-taught but he admits that he went to several master musicians in Vietnam to work out specific technical problems. He would very much like to have a mentor, he says, but he feels that art is primarily inspiration, and inspiration can't be taught. He is interested in Zen Buddhism and practices meditation every day — no small achievement in a place where noise and activity never seem to stop. His dream is not so much to play in crowded American or European concert halls, but rather, to achieve a state of meditation while playing the guitar.

Tran agrees. "I am an artist," he asserts. After a pause he repeats himself, to make sure the point is clear. "I am a true artist." This is why he felt compelled to leave Vietnam, hoping for a chance to play and study in

people in the overcrowded Palawan camp arrived after March 1989, when the new refugee policy was signed into law here in the Philippines. The screening process itself just began at the end of last year, and so far roughly half of those screened have been designated refugees.

Some officials are surprised

that the number is so high.

Although international negotiations on the refugees' fate are underway, no one knows at this point what will happen to the asylum-seekers who are told they don't qualify.

Tran says he doesn't worry. He's happy to be in the Palawan camp because he is free to play his guitar when he wants to play, without having to worry about making his living playing government-approved music or teaching.

The third of seven children of schoolteacher parents, he says that he never really supported himself playing music in his native Nha Trang City, but that he did have students from time to time.

In fact, his best friend from Vietnam, Nguyen Ho To Uyen, a 17-year-old girl who plays and sings with breathtaking maturity and grace, is now staying in the same camp. Neither one knew that the other had left Vietnam. They met again in a "transit centre" in Manila and have been playing music together ever since. In all, Tran has five students in the camp.

spiration, and inspiration can't be taught. He is interested in Zen Buddhism and practices meditation every day — no small achievement in a place where noise and activity never seem to stop. His dream is not so much to play in crowded American or European concert halls, but rather, to achieve a state of meditation while playing the guitar.

Rockwell calls him "a diamond in the rough," but Tran is no primitive. He understands music thoroughly (he transposed his Chopin pieces from piano scores), and he has strong opinions about the styles, strengths and weaknesses of the most celebrated guitarists of the age. He is not afraid to compare himself with the great ones. He's convinced, for example, that his way of holding the guitar — with his legs crossed instead of slightly spread — gives him more speed and flexibility than, say, the legendary Spanish guitarist Segovia.

It's clear that Tran is not satisfied with simply following in the footsteps of the masters. In fact, he's like to change some of the art's fundamental groundrules.

"I have a plan for an eight-string guitar," he says matter-of-factly. Then struggling to find the words to explain his idea in English: "Because when I play a six-string guitar, I see that it's not enough.

When I look at the history of the guitar, I see that it used to have five strings. So very soon I will build an eight-string guitar."

And where will he build it? "Here in the camp. In the next few months I will do it."

But isn't he impatient to leave, to get on with life? Tran shrugs. No, he will take things as they come. "I have a crazy idea," he confides with a laugh. "I help everyone, and the Gods help me" — World News Link.



25-year-old Tran Vu Hung goes to a world of his own when he plays his guitar.

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Bram Van Velde (1895-1981)

Painter of the invisible

By Oscarine Bosquet

PARIS — The Paris National Modern Art Museum is devoting a retrospective exhibition of 88 oil and gouache paintings to the artist Bram Van Velde, who, for thirty years, was ignored by the Paris and American public.

Bram Van Velde's painting came to the fore after the war in the existentialist climate of the Sartre years. It was discovered, defended and interpreted by Samuel Beckett as a work of the impossibility of being, and as the painting of nothingness and failure. His painting was confronted by all the ideologies and utopias of the post-war period. It was commonplace and its banality was a criticism of its contemporaneity. It was far removed from the manifestos and revolutions in art. He was struggling with the impossibility of painting.

His pictorial language historically came from the German expressionism of the 20s, Matisse's still-lives and windows, and the discontinuous fragmented, broken-up spaces of cubism. In the 50s, he provided the link between the geometrical and lyrical abstraction of the Paris School, which he hated, American abstract expressionism, Picasso and Matisse, and line and colour. The drawing does not enclose the object. It goes into the circularity of the painting and its fluidity and liquidity. His painting stands at the point of balance between abstraction and figuration. It figures is a self-portrait; it opens up on a mental space, a magma of shapes which collapse and slide, an interior in which things are not sure, fixed and determined, a labyrinth. "To no longer be a painter, but a being who pursues life through the means of colour. To paint, not in order to succeed in a picture, but in order to rush inside oneself and to make the being more keen" — L'Actualité en France.

But one can see is unstable. One no longer knows if it is the line or the colour which defines the shapes.

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One of the works of Bram Van Velde painted in 1940. Untitled



Marine disaster: Destruction of coral reefs

By Jon Miller

PALAWAN ISLAND, The Philippines — "You see those huts?" asks Norman Songco, pointing at a bare spot on the shoreline as the wooden boat chugs out into Puerto Princesa Bay. "They set up a sort of picnic area. The first thing they did was cut down all the mangrove trees. They thought they'd have a beach — what they got was a mud flat."

In itself, the tiny picnic area is not a major problem — 20 metres of blighted coastline and a buried stretch of coral reef — but to Songco it illustrates a point. You can't expect to cash in on the environment, he says, unless you are willing to do what it takes to preserve it.

Songco, a 39-year-old former engineer, makes his living guiding tourists to the coral reefs off the coast of this mountainous, sparsely populated island. Since they were "discovered" by divers a few years ago, those reefs have offered some of the most varied and colourful underwater scenery in the world.

But that, like so much here on Philippines' rugged last

frontier, is changing fast. Palawan's extensive coral reefs, still pristine by the standards of the rest of the Philippines, are in trouble. Rapid growth, poverty, corruption and simple ignorance have conspired against a fragile living environment that takes years to build and seconds to destroy.

Throughout the Philippines, and throughout the tropical oceans of the world, corals are disappearing at an alarming rate. Commercial fishing with explosives or cyanide — with a barbaric method called "muro-ami" — cause the most dramatic damage. Mine tailings and industrial pollution pose serious problems in many coastal areas as well, and siltation from poorly planned logging and agriculture can have a lasting and devastating effect.

So far, scuba divers have been the most vocal opponents of the destruction of the Philippine reefs. Songco, for example, has become active in a local environmental group and has begun to document the damage he sees on his dives. Other divers have banded together to try to persuade the govern-

ment to designate prime diving spots as marine parks.

But the crisis on the reefs is not just a divers' problem. Delicate reef ecosystems provide food and livelihood for millions of marginal fishermen and their families. Researchers at the University of the Philippines estimate that coral reefs provide as much as 25 per cent of the total catch of fish eaten in this island country. But if trends continue, there is no way that that level can be sustained.

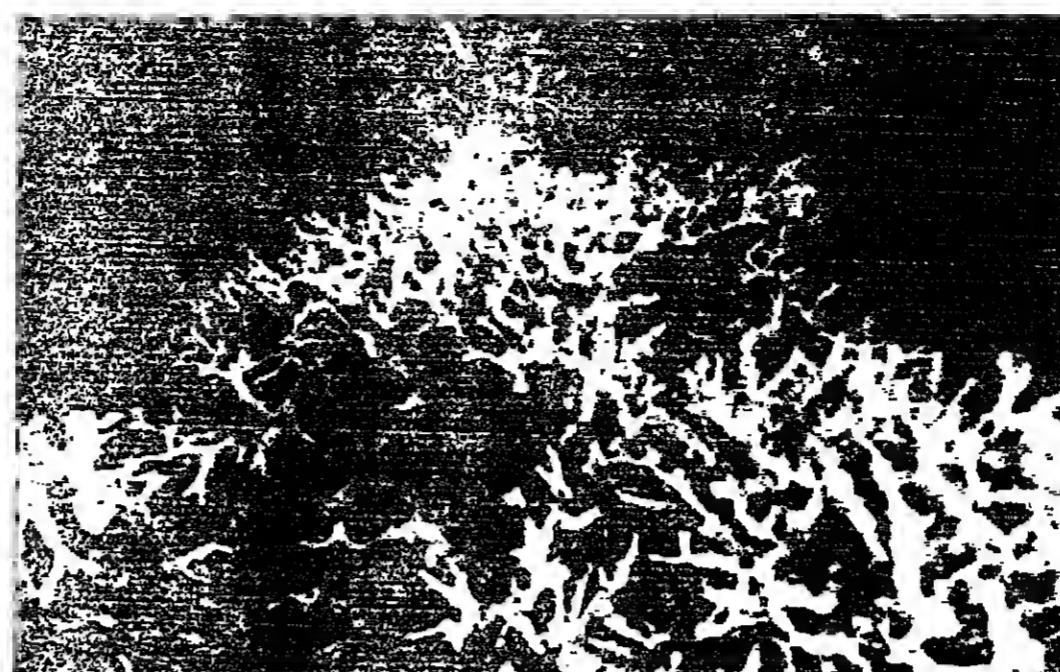
Scientists say that about 70 per cent of the country's reefs are at best in "poor to fair" condition and that as many as 40 per cent can be considered destroyed.

"The biggest problem is simply population growth," says Bill Staub, an Asian Development Bank official who has been active in the fight to save Palawan's Tubbataha Reef. Staub has watched Tubbataha — a remote preserve of 33,500 hectares (about 83,000 acres) with as much biological diversity as Australia's Great Barrier Reef — fall prey to an onslaught on "invaders" from islands whose reefs have already been ravaged.

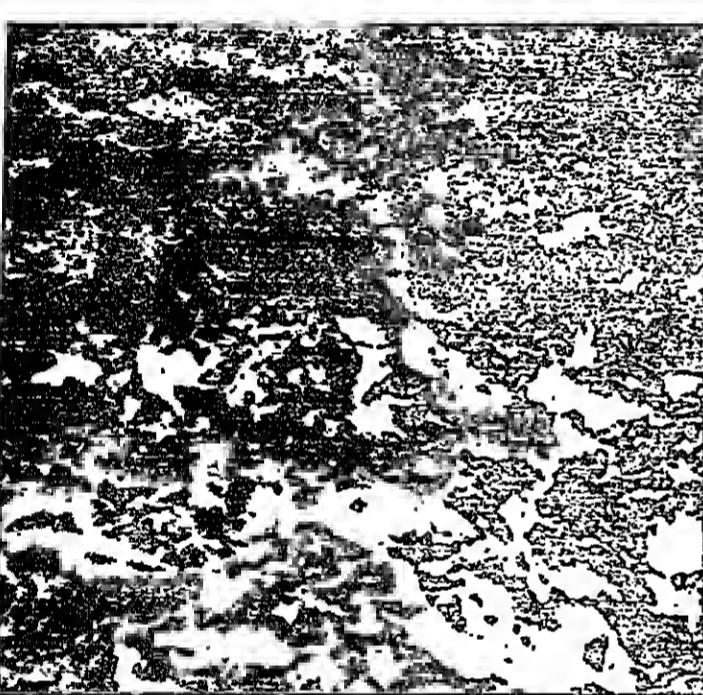
Many of those invaders are poor fishermen looking for better catches, but some of the most threatening are large commercial enterprises. And although a good number are from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan, most are from the Philippines. In recent months a well-financed Filipino seaweed-farming company has taken advantage of the government's lax enforcement efforts and has set up illegal operations on a particularly sensitive section of Tubbataha Reef.

"It's a shame," laments Roland Rodriguez, a Palawan native and director of the island's environmental planning office. Rodriguez points out that migrants from other parts of the country are putting a strain on all of Palawan's resources and marine resources are no exception.

Like many of the slash-and-



A healthy coral reef, one of a few left fisheries and a paradise for scuba divers.



A coral reef devastated by dynamite fishing near Palawan Island.

burn farmers who have ruined the island's upland forests, most of the people fishing in Palawan's waters have come from the over-crowded Visayas islands of the central Philippines. "They have destroyed the coral reefs in their own places," Rodriguez says, "and now they're coming here." The results have been disastrous.

On Tubbataha Reef, 150 kilometres out to sea, fishermen report a catch that is one third of what it was six years ago.

Staub notes that poor fishermen throughout the country are beginning to recognise the need to preserve their fishing grounds, and in some areas they have begun to organise patrols to monitor destructive and illegal fishing. But although Palawan fishermen claim that it is mostly outsiders who cause the damage, they admit that it is difficult to resist using environmentally destructive methods or to stand up to others who do so.

"In a lot of communities, people look at dynamite fishing the same way that urbanites look at jaywalking," Staub explains. "It's the sort of situation where if you play by the rules you lose, because so many people aren't playing by the rules."

Of all the fishing methods that destroy reefs, "muro-ami" is the most deadly. The technique was brought to the Philippines by Japanese

fishermen around World War II and has recently grown more popular. In large muro-ami operations, hundreds of young men and boys surround a boat, carrying long "scare lines" or ropes with weights attached. The boys swim along with the boat, banging the weights on the ocean floor and driving fish into large nets. It is extremely dangerous for the boys, who are sometimes required to dive without air tanks to depths as great as 30 metres, and the weights do tremendous damage to the corals.

But in the Philippines muro-ami is big business, and big business is politics. Despite a temporary ban on the practice, it has been widely reported that at least one influential politician with a financial interest in muro-ami fisheries has subverted law-enforcement efforts.

Even for the casual snorkel-diver, it's not difficult to locate the effects of pollution, siltation, explosives, poisons and muro-ami. Although the surface of the water may be calm, many places on the floor of Puerto Princesa Bay look like minefields. Here and there a stunning clump of coloured coral will rise out of a wasteland of pale, broken coral branches. Where blasting has occurred, it is easy to see where the charge was dropped, and where there has been runoff from nearby hills, suffocated corals are

easily seen.

Yet Palawan's reefs are, by all accounts, in better condition than those almost everywhere else in this country of about 7,000 islands.

Dr. Porfirio Alino, a marine biologist at the College of Fisheries, reports that he routinely hears blasting during his research dives in the northern Philippines — as many as six explosions per hour. Alino has also studied the effects of mine tailings on corals. Off Cebu Island, Alias Mining, a copper-mining company, dumps 110,000 tonnes of waste material per day which ends up covering corals and destroying the reefs without any hope of recovery.

Songco has been directly affected by the destruction. He moved to Palawan seven years ago, after the diving spots that he had frequented in the northern Philippines had been destroyed by dynamite fishing. They were favourite destinations for international divers.

He knows that fishing is more important to the country than scuba diving, but he, like other environmentalists, thinks that it is possible to live with the sea in a way that makes sense in the long term. "I'm not saying don't touch it," he says, looking out over the turquoise waters of Puerto Princesa Bay. "I'm saying, think about it, care for it, and use it right" — World News Link.

There is less agreement on what happens next. Although the Earth is expected to get warmer, temperature predictions range from an increase of less than one degree C to as high as five degrees C.

The different climate models all show some disruption to weather systems at any temperature increase of more than one degree C.

According to these models, sea levels would be likely to rise, causing coastal flooding. Also, there would be more precipitation in some areas and severe droughts in others.

But no one is sure how global warming would affect specific regions. As a result, some scientists and many economists are opposed to big, and expensive, changes in fuel consumption.

There is little certainty about the extent of mean global warming," said Lester Lave, economics professor at Carnegie-Mellon University. "In contrast, the cost of abating the emissions of greenhouse gases is certain."

Lave argues that policy-makers must weigh the certain costs of abatement against uncertain scenarios "that range from the trivial to the catastrophic."

Looking at the issue from an economic perspective, Lave said, nations may be able to adapt to some global warming.

Other scientists, however, see imminent disruption, particularly in the developing world, from any further warming.

"There is every reason to believe that there would not be a smooth adjustment in the economy in the face of global warming because of the underlying chaotic nature of climate," said Daniel Lashof, an environmental scientist with the Washington-based Natural Resources Defense Council.

Lashof noted that rice is particularly sensitive to minute changes in temperature and temperatures in Asia are already at the upper limits of the crop's tolerance range.

Consequently, most scientists argue that despite the uncertainty inherent in climate prediction models policies should be put in place now that would avert any potential catastrophe.

"Some may be tempted to exploit legitimate concerns for political positioning. Our responsibility is to maintain the quality of our approach, our commitment to sound science and an open mind to policy options," Bush said.

However, scientists at the recent American Association for the Advancement of Sci-

World climate is changing but no one is sure how and why

By Catherine Arnst

ence conference in New Orleans said it will take a minimum of 10 years before computer modelling will even begin to accurately predict climate change.

In the meantime, they say, CO₂ emissions will continue to rise, making the greenhouse effect harder to reverse.

"By the time the climatic response (to greenhouse gases) is obvious, it may be impossible to reverse global warming," said Kevin Trenberth of the National Centre for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado.

Most scientists do agree that the Earth has warmed up by about 0.6 degrees centigrade the past 100 years — a significant change considering that global temperatures have risen a total of only five degrees C since the end of the ice Age 18,000 years ago.

It is also widely agreed that there has been a 25 per cent increase in the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere since the mid-1800s, thanks to industrialisation.

And most models show that, if CO₂ emissions increase by one per cent a year, a conservative estimate, the volume of the gas in the Earth's atmosphere will have doubled in the next 40 to 60 years.

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Features

Protest greets senators

(Continued from page 1)

candle-light vigil of about 200 people — some of them wearing colourful Palestinian dresses and holding placards. The otherwise silent protest was marred only by a short spell of boos which some people said was sparked by a comment by one of the senators that "Jerusalem is Israeli and is united" apparently in reply to the banners which proclaimed "Jerusalem is holy to Muslims, Christians and Jews."

It was not immediately clear which of the senators made the remark. According to several members of the protest group, including Daoud Sulaiman, a former member of parliament, the comment came from Howard Metzenbaum, a Democrat from Ohio and a staunch supporter of Israel. Haj Zaki Al Ghul, a member of Jerusalem Municipality, said it could have been Metzenbaum but he could not be sure. There was no independent confirmation of the incident. No American official could be immediately reached for comment.

Among the slogans painted on banners hoisted outside by the protest group, which included many children wearing the Palestinian chequered headcloths, were: "Acknowledgement of Jerusalem as capital of Israel equals declaration of war"; "Playing with Jerusalem is playing with fire"; "Bush courageous, Senate outrageous"; "U.S. Senate resolution violates U.S. constitution"; "Be free of the Israeli lobby"; and "Israeli lobby dictates, American people pay."

An occasional Palestinian nationalist slogan was heard, but the chanters were immediately silenced by the organisers, who insisted on keeping to the traditions of a "silent, peaceful protest".

Inside the hotel lobby, the senators held a brief meeting with six representatives of the protest group, organised by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) Jordan Chapter.

Among those expressing the Arab rejection of the Senate resolution on Jerusalem was former minister Hazem Nusseibeh, former Jerusalem Deputy Fadi Farraj and ADC American Chapter President Nidal Sukkar in addition to Ghul.

In reply to pointed remarks that the U.S. Senate resolution was totally unacceptable in terms of international legitimacy and that it contravenes long-standing official American policy on the status of the Holy City, Dole would only point out that the resolution was "non-binding" on the administration.

A two-page memorandum, which described the resolution as confirming the American Senate's "discrimination against Arabs" and "discrediting the sentiments of both Christians and Muslims who also rightly believe

Substitute laws drafted

(Continued from page 1)

level, are under way with Syria" to release Jordanian detainees from Syrian prisons. In January, the Lower House sent an appeal to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad calling for the release of Jordanian prisoners, some of whom have been held since 1970.

According to Karak Deputy Issa Mdanat, at least five of the detainees were senior leaders of the Baathist and Syrian Saqqa parties, and were imprisoned by the Damascus government in 1971.

The five, according to other sources, are Hakem Al Fayez, Thaifi Musa Al Jamani, Mujahid Nasrawi, Hassan Al Khafif and Yousef Juma Al Barji. No exact dates of their imprisonment are available but all were

IMF said seeking cuts

(Continued from page 1)

Last week's five days of talks with the IMF cleared the way for rescheduling \$640 million in foreign debt instalments due in 1991 to foreign governments. Jardaneh said the agreement reached with the IMF would help Jordan to "reschedule the largest possible portion of \$450 million in interest due on foreign loans in 1991."

The finance minister said the negotiations "facilitated the pro-

Peres gets 15 days

(Continued from page 1)

After a tumultuous debate in which Jewish and Arab members voted, with hapless Speaker Dov Shulansky incapable of maintaining order, parliament adjourned. It is not due to meet again until the regular summer session opens May 7.

"Today's production was a disaster to the Knesset. Democracy has turned into a kind of farce," said caucus leader Sarah Doron on Israel Radio.

Labour opened Israel's latest political crisis last month by walking out of a 15-month-old national unity government with Likud over Shamir's sacking of Peres and his refusal to accept U.S. proposals for Israeli-Palestinian peace talks in Cairo.

Parliament passed on unopposed a no-confidence motion. Shamir's rump cabinet on March 15 and Herzog asked

Jerusalem to be their holy city as well," was accepted by the senators. The memorandum also pointed out that the resolution constituted a "grave injustice" and urged the Senate to "rescind... its politically motivated resolution."

When it was requested of Dole that a copy of the memo be conveyed to President George Bush, Dole threw off an over-the-shoulder reply: "He doesn't need a copy." It was not clear what the Senate minority leader meant by his remark.

Outside the lobby, meanwhile, the reported comment by one of the senators that Jerusalem was Israeli and what some saw as the "cold-shoulder attitude of the senators" appeared to have kicked up a controversy and threatened to undermine the otherwise "diplomatic atmosphere."

"We have been taught to believe that America stood for fairness and democracy," said Ghul. "What we saw and heard here today proves that it is not so. The senators obviously came here with the preconceived idea that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel as the gentleman said in the committee. So, I really do not know why they bothered to come."

The Senate delegation's current Middle East swing, which has already taken them to Syria and Egypt and will include Iraq and Israel, is described as a fact-finding mission.

In his cart, brief exchange with the representatives of the protest group, Dole said the American and Jordanian governments had "very strong relations." He reaffirmed that the appeal of the group was "the same that we heard from the King" in the meeting earlier in the evening. "We are hoping for peace in the region," he said.

Representatives of the ADC, the Human Rights Group, the Jerusalem Forum, the Jerusalem Philanthropic Society, Bassira, the American University of Beirut graduates and the Association of Jordanian Writers took part in Wednesday's protest action.

The senators flew in from Egypt and were to fly to Baghdad early Thursday.

Also on the delegation are senators Alan Simpson of Wyoming, James McClure of Idaho, Frank Murkowski of Alaska and Charles Grassley, all Republicans.

Asked about the trip to Iraq, Dole told reporters on arrival: "We're going to listen to President Saddam Hussein, but we are also going to express real concerns we have in the United States."

Relations between the two countries have been strained by U.S. allegations Iraq tried to smuggle nuclear triggering devices, by Hussein warning he would "burn half of Israel" if attacked and by the U.S. expulsion of an Iraqi diplomat.



Laila Imeish (standing, second from left) was among 12 Canadian women who were last year's top Women on the Move, chosen from among 200 nominees.

Jordanian immigrant honoured in Canada

Laila Imeish, a Canadian of Jordanian origin, has been named in Toronto as one of twelve Women on the Move for her role in advancing the cause of women in Canada and especially the cause of new immigrants.

Laila Imeish knows about immigrants. She was an immigrant child when her family left Jordan and moved to Spain.

Then, as an immigrant teen, Imeish came here (Canada) in '71, got herself through university, then settled back into the immigrant community where

she's spread her wings for the past 10 years.

As co-ordinator for the Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre, Imeish has met women from countries as different as Afghanistan and Yugoslavia and 70 countries in between. She's met rich and poor, educated and not, those who speak their own tongue and those whose languages include almost everything but English.

To each of them she puts two questions: What can you do to earn money, today?

What can you do for the rest of your life? Helping immigrant women out of the job ghetto is neither pretty nor high profile: It's convincing an employer to give an immigrant a job, building a network for Portuguese cleaning ladies, teaching immigrants Canadian office etiquette, and urging them to upgrade their English skills.

In seeing many women immigrant architects cleaning the buildings they had been building back home, she got the idea to implement a Computer Aided Design Drafting Program

at George Brown College. It helps immigrants with a design background to translate the skills they learned in their own countries — 90% of those who've gone through it are working today.

Often, it's one-to-one support she offers. A Russian woman with PhD in library science was on welfare here when she met Imeish. Over time, Imeish helped the woman upgrade her degree, get into university and eventually get a job with one of the province's largest libraries.

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Economy

Traders blame price drops on OPEC quota violations

OPEC stays calm as oil prices renew their slide

LONDON (R) — Oil prices extended a dramatic fall Wednesday in a market laden with surplus OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) crude but the cartel apparently saw no reason for crisis talks yet.

London futures for the North Sea's Brent blend of crude oil, a world benchmark, were 25 cents down at \$16.45 per barrel at midday. U.S. crude futures lost 76 cents Tuesday.

Traders blamed the drop in prices to 14-month lows on members of the OPEC which are breaking assigned output quotas in a scramble for cash.

An OPEC minister, Indonesia's Gajah Kartasasmita, dampened speculation that OPEC felt so alarmed by the fall it might hold emergency talks ahead of a meeting already scheduled for May 25.

"There is no need to think of holding a meeting between now and May," he told Reuters in Jakarta. "We always experience this cycle but I am convinced we can settle the problem."

The current April-June quarter between the northern winter and the peak holiday motoring season is always a weak spot in the oil market.

The pace of the current slide in prices has surprised some veteran traders.

Average prices have dropped almost \$6 per barrel since early January, when they were held up by exceptionally cold weather in North America which increased demand for heating oil. They have lost more than \$2.50 in the last week.

Exceeding quotas

Western industry sources say several of the 13 OPEC members, but notably Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, are overproducing.

As a result Iran, and to some extent Iraq, cannot find contract buyers for all of their quota production and have had to unload big volumes on the spot or free markets.

Sources say at least 20 million barrels of Iranian oil were available in Europe early in April. Western oil company stocks generally are brimming. Texas storage tanks are full.

Besides Indonesia's Gajah Kartasasmita, other OPEC officials also said it is unlikely the group will hold emergency talks unless the price slide becomes a crash of the kind seen in 1986.

The Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) estimated OPEC's production hit a nine-year high of more than 24 million BPD in March.

"Demand for OPEC crude in the second quarter is around 22 million BPD," said Satoshi Ueki, chief economist at Japan's Iidemitsu Kosan. "OPEC production at 24 million will ensure that prices will continue to fall."

"From the demand side there is no optimistic picture," said Ito. "Physically the major consuming nations cannot absorb all this crude so OPEC cannot keep up the production."

On Tuesday, the American Petroleum Institute reported that U.S. crude oil stocks had risen to around 370 million barrels, their highest level for the time of year since 1982.

Demand from Japan, the world's second largest oil importer after the United States, is expected to fall below three million BPD in the second quarter from around 3.5 million in the first, due to scheduled refinery maintenance, Japanese refiners say.

And even very low oil prices are unlikely to encourage Japanese bargain-hunting buying, they say.

Far East blames OPEC

"OPEC's production is the reason for the sharp drop in oil prices and it's up to OPEC itself now to take effective measures to stop the decline," said Masao Ito, a general manager at Nippon Oil in Tokyo.

The Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) estimated OPEC's production hit a nine-year high of more than 24 million BPD in March.

Many banks were also able to cut loan loss provisions which previously devoured large portions of their income and to step up lending as the kingdom's largest joint venture, Saudi American Bank (SAMBA), told Reuters.

"The size of the pipe is steadily growing and the drain on resources by loan loss provisions is much smaller," he said.

SAMBA, owned 40 per cent by Citibank, saw its net profit surge 79 per cent to a record \$22 million (121 million) in 1989. Its profit rose 34.5 per cent in first quarter 1990.

Bankers said a tide of government payments to contractors — many long overdue — which began late last year had boosted liquidity in the banking system.

Official figures show deposits in the kingdom's 12 commercial banks grew 5.9 per cent to 142.8 billion riyals (\$38 billion) in the year to February 1990.

But bankers said they believed the market share of the joint ventures had risen sharply. Three of the seven who have reported 1989 results so far have had record net profits.

A 3.4 per cent rise in the volume of "cheap" or non-interest bearing funds to \$6.2 billion (17.6 billion) also improved the banks' performance.

Many customers in Saudi Arabia put their money in current account because of Islamic religious strictures against interest.

The banks lend the funds on interest in the interbank market.

"These have been a general increase in operating profit across the board — deposits have grown and loans have picked up thanks to an upturn in industry," Aman Mehta, managing director of Saudi British Bank, told Reuters.

"Most banks are comfortably with the level of loan loss provisions they have now... there is a feeling in varying degrees they have broken the back of the business," he said.

Bankers said after years of grappling with private sector loans hit by the mid 1980s recession, most of the joint ventures had provided against more than 60 per cent of the doubtful debt.

Saudi British returned to the state in 1989 with a 123 million riyal (\$33 million) loss in 1988 after setting aside provisions of 300 million riyals (\$80 million).

Mistri said expansion plans by the state oil firm Saudi Aramco was expected to gain momentum in the next few years, providing more lending opportunities for Saudi Banks.

Firms would increasingly be expected to provide their own finance as the government gradually reduced its role.

Saudi Aramco plans to spend up to \$20 billion over the next 10 years to gradually expand its crude output capacity to around 10 million barrels per day (BPD) from 6.5 million now — provided world demand continues to grow and crude prices hold due to Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) overproduction.

Confidence in local lending had increased in the last two years as banks found it easier to collect overdue loans, mainly because a special tribunal set up by the government in 1987 to hear the cases had taken a much tougher stand, they said.

Saudi banks foresee more loans if oil prices remain firm

BAHRAIN (R) — Saudi Arabia's joint venture banks, buoyed by their strongest performance in five years, foresee more growth in their loan portfolios provided oil prices do not fall too far in 1990.

Bankers say a huge influx of funds spawned by higher oil prices and interest rates in 1989 fuelled a dramatic rise in profits for most of the kingdom's nine joint ventures.

Many banks were also able to cut loan loss provisions which previously devoured large portions of their income and to step up lending as the kingdom's largest joint venture, Saudi American Bank (SAMBA), told Reuters.

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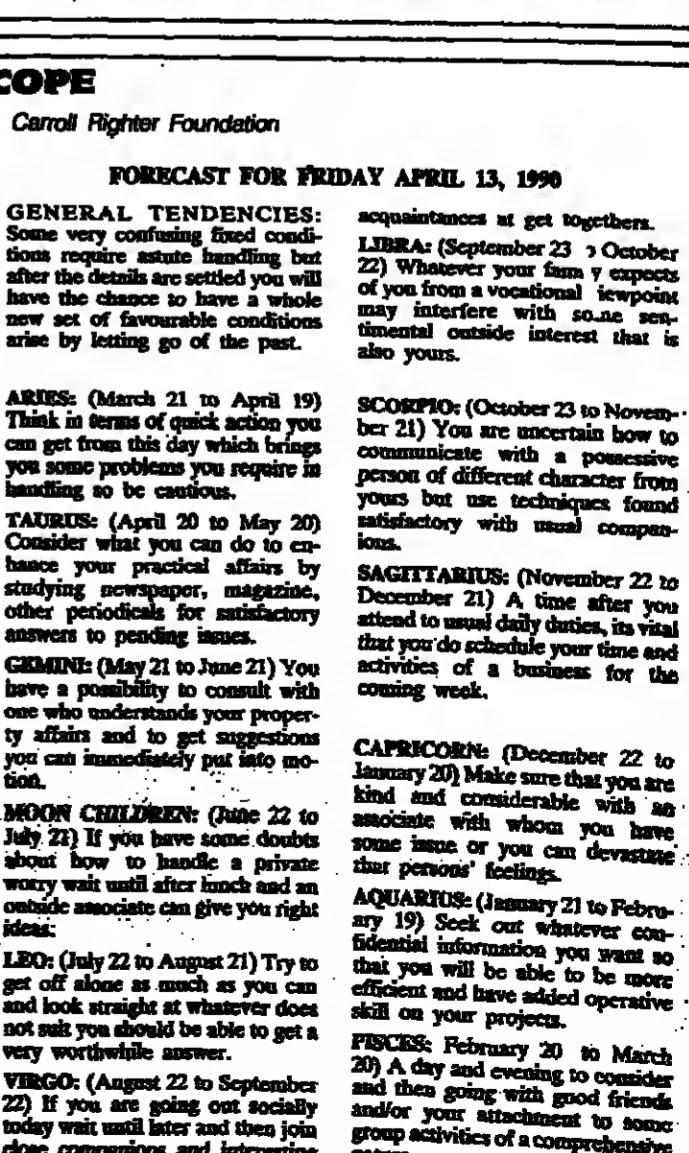
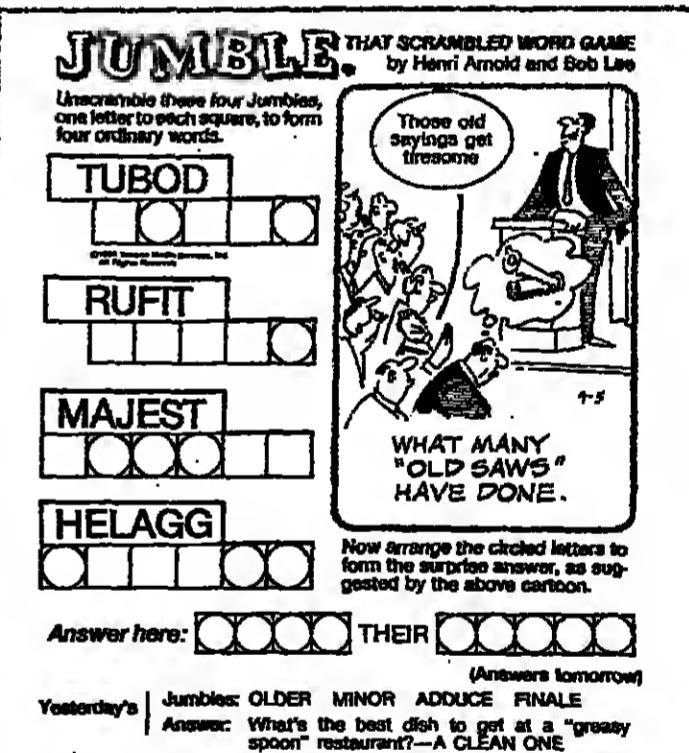
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JORDAN TIMES, THURSDAY-FRIDAY, APRIL 12-13, 1990

THE Daily Crossword by J. M. New



GENERAL TENDENCIES: Some very confusing fixed conditions require astute handling but after the details are settled you will have the chance to have a whole new set of favourable conditions arise by letting go of the past.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Think in terms of quick action you can get from this day which brings you some problems you require in hand to be cautious.

TAUROS: (April 20 to May 20) Consider what you can do to enhance your practical affairs by studying newspaper, magazine, other periodicals for satisfactory answers to pending issues.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You have a possibility to consult with one who understands your property affairs and to get suggestions you can immediately put into motion.

MONSIEUR CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 22) If you have some doubts about how to handle a private worry wait until after lunch and an outside associate can give you right ideas.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Try to get off alone as much as you can and look straight at whatever does not suit you should be able to get a very worthwhile answer.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Make sure that you are kind and considerate with an associate with whom you have some issue or you can deviate their persons' feelings.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Seek out whatever confidential information you want so that you will be able to be more efficient and have added operative skill on your projects.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A day and evening to consider and then going with good friends and/or your attachment to some group activities of a comprehensive nature.

England takes third place in table tennis

GOTHENBURG, Sweden (R) — Skyle Andrew had a dream day at the European table tennis championships Wednesday when he helped England win third place in the men's team event with a 5-1 victory over Yugoslavia.

Andrew had sat on the sidelines since Sunday watching his team mates, silver medallists two years ago, win through to the last four.

England coach Don Parker decided to take a gamble in playing Andrew instead of the tired Desmond Douglas in the third-place play-off.

The move paid off when the extrovert Londoner beat Zoran Kalinic 21-19, 21-11 despite a nervous start and Ilijas Lupusku, ranked 11th in Europe, 12-21, 22-20, 23-21.

"Two players ranked considerably higher than him and he beat them both, so that's superb," said Parker after Andrew's debut in the division one category of the team event.

"As we weren't playing for the title and both teams get bronze medal I thought I would give Skyle a go and it was a chance to rest Des. He fought extremely hard and they were two excellent wins."

England number one Alan Cooke was the only man to lose, beaten 21-12, 21-9 by Zoran Primorac, following a 23-21, 21-14 win over Lupusku. The steady Carl Prean added three-game victories over Primorac and Kalinic.

Jana Fazic, ranked 13th in Europe, led Yugoslavia to a comfortable victory in the women's third-place play-offs.

Fazic won both her singles and helped Gordana Perkovic, her partner at the Olympics when they won bronze together, to take the doubles as Yugoslavia beat the Netherlands 3-1.

Only Mirjam Hooman was victorious among the Dutch, winning the opening tie against Perkovic, world doubles silver medallist last year, in three games.

The result reversed the outcome of the 1988 European championships in Paris when the Netherlands finished third and Yugoslavia fourth.

Sweden plays Germany

Tuesday, Mikael Appelgren

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIA HIRSCH
01289 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

READ 'EM AND CHEER

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♦ A J
♦ J 10 7 2
♦ K 8 6 3
♦ A 5 4

WEST
♦ 10 8 7 6 2 ♦ K 9 4 3
♦ 9 4 3 ♦ 5
♦ 7 ♦ A J 10 9 2
♦ J 10 7 2 ♦ Q 6 3

SOUTH
♦ Q 5
♦ A K Q 8 6
♦ Q 5 4
♦ K 9 8

Opening lead: Seven of ♦

Bridge books will tell you that you need 26-27 points, including distribution, to make game in a major suit. Here, the North-South assets in high cards alone total 29 with a nine-card fit, yet game was only thing to laydown.

These days, an excellent five-card major suit is no reason to forgo making a descriptive opening bid of one no trump. North checked on a

extended his superb unbeaten run to put holders Sweden into the European table tennis team final for the 13th time.

But Appelgren and his team mates expect a difficult title clash after West Germany swept through their semifinal with a 5-0 thrashing of Yugoslavia.

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NBA basketball roundup

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey (AP) — Kevin McHale had 24 points and 13 rebounds to lead a balanced Boston attack and the Celtics continued their run at first place in the NBA's Atlantic Division by posting their fourth straight victory, a 112-96 decision over Indiana.

Reggie Lewis added 21 points, Larry Bird had 19 and Robert Parish 18 points and 10 rebounds as the Celtics took the lead for good in the first quarter Tuesday night and won for the eighth time in 11 games.

Dominique Wilkins scored 29 points and Moses Malone added 23 as Atlanta snapped a three-game losing streak and pulled within one-half game of Cleveland in the battle for the eighth and last Eastern Conference playoff berth, beating Philadelphia 123-111.

John Battle added 19 points and Rivers 18 for Atlanta while Hersey Hawkins had 27 and Charles Barkley 24 for Philadelphia.

Akeem Olajuwon scored 27 points and pulled down 19 rebounds and Houston, battling for a playoff berth, curtailed a late comeback by Charlotte, winning 115-112. The Rockets entered the game trailing Seattle by 1½ games and Denver by one-half game for the final Western Conference playoff spot.

The Rockets led 109-100 with 55 seconds remaining but 3-pointers by Richard Anderson, Dell Curry, Anderson and Kelly Tripucka put Charlotte within two with five seconds left.

Ishia Thomas scored 21 points and Mark Aguirre 20 and Detroit outscored New York 30-17 in the first 10 minutes of the third quarter to win 108-98. The Pistons led only 51-49 at halftime but they made 12 of their first 17 shots in the first 10 minutes of the third period and opened an 81-66 lead.

Patrick Ewing scored 26 points and Gerald Wilkins 19 for New York.

Clyde Drexler's 26 points was followed by Jerome Kersey's 22 in Portland's 106-94 victory over Minnesota. The Trail Blazers won their 54th game, second most in the franchise's history.

Portland went 58-24 in 1977-78. Portland also won for the eighth time in its last 11 road games and has 21 road victories, the most since the 1977-78 club went 22-19.

Ricky Pierce sank four free throws in the final 25 seconds and Milwaukee outscored Orlando 9-2 during the last two minutes in handing the Magic their 10th straight loss, 130-127. Pierce scored 31 points and Brad Lohaus and Jay Humphries added 23 and 21, respectively, as the Bucks won their fourth straight game.

Orlando lost for the 26th time in its last 28 games despite 29

possible heart fit, and leaped to game when he located it.

South was Sylvia Hazen of New York. West's diamond lead was ducked in dummy and East's nine was taken by the queen. (Note that, if East rises with the ace and gives partner a ruff, declarer can claim the contract—dummy's diamond king will provide a parking spot for one of her losers.) Declarer drew three rounds of trumps, led a club to the ace and returned a club from dummy. East carefully inserted the queen to avoid being played. Declarer won the king and exited with a club to West's ten.

When West shifted to a spade, declarer was at the crossroads—she had to decide between an endplay and a finesse. South guessed the situation perfectly by going up with the ace of spades and returning the suit to East's king. The defense was dealer than a doornail.

If East returned a black suit, declarer would discard a diamond from hand while ruffing on the board. And a diamond would be up to the table's king. Either way, Mrs. Hazen had limited her losers to one spade, one club and one diamond.

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Performances: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30

Lendl, Edberg advance in Japan Open

TOKYO (Agencies) — Top-seed Ivan Lendl, playing just 20 hours after arriving in Tokyo, and second-seeded Stefan Edberg Wednesday won their singles matches easily to advance to the third round of the \$1.15 million Japan Open tennis tournament.

Person led six pacers in double figures with 25 points. Reggie Miller added 19, Rick Smits 18 and Vern Fleming 16. Washington's Bernard King had 35, Darrell Walker 18 and Jeff Malone 16.

Karl Malone's 33 points and John Stockton's 20 assists sparked Utah to a franchise record 52nd victory. Seattle's loss,

combined with Houston's victory over Charlotte, dropped the Sonics one-half game behind the Rockets in the battle for the Western Conference playoff slot.

Thuri Bailey added 22 points for Utah and Bobby Hansen added 14. Dale Ellis led the Sonics with 30 points and Xavier McDaniel added 22. The Jazz wrapped it up with a 10-2 run in the final 2:11.

Blair Rasmussen scored a season-high 26 points and Denver took advantage of a three-minute scoring drought by Sacramento. The Kings went 3:10 without scoring until Pervis Ellison's layup with 51 seconds remaining.

The Nuggets managed five points during Sacramento's scoreless stretch, giving them a 112-106 lead, and they scored 13 of their final 15 points from the foul line. Alex English scored 23 points and Michael Adams 19 for the Nuggets. Danny Ainge led Sacramento with 22 and Wayman Tisdale and Rodney McCray each scored 21.

Rookie centre David Robinson scored 36 points and grabbed 12 rebounds in leading San Antonio to its 50th victory, the sixth 50-win season in franchise history.

San Antonio, which went 21-61 in 1988-89, is 29 games ahead of its record at this time last year.

If the Spurs can win four of their remaining six games they will eclipse the NBA-record 32-game turnaround of the 1979-80 Boston Celtics.

Rookie forward Sean Elliott added 23 points and six assists for San Antonio. The Warriors were led by Chris Mullin's 26 points and Terry Teague's 20.

Tom Garick scored 17 points and the Clippers rallied from an 18-point second-half deficit. Derek Harper led the Mavericks with 30 points and Rolando Blackman added 23 but Dallas was outscored 34-16 in the fourth quarter.

Charles Smith and Benoit Benjamin scored 16 points each for the Clippers, who trailed 56-38 with 11:41 left in the third quarter.

They closed the gap to 74-64 at the end of the period, and a 14-4 run to start the fourth quarter tied the score 78-78 with 7:22 left.

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Radical Soviet Communist leader demands immediate party split

MOSCOW (R) — A leader of a powerful bloc of Soviet Communist radicals, under siege by party conservatives, demanded Wednesday an immediate split in the ranks and the formation of a new Social Democratic Party.

Ilya Chubais said attacks on the reformist Democratic Platform movement represented a coup by leading conservative Yegor Ligachev and his allies and the start of a witch hunt.

"We call on all Communists to leave the party, to stop paying dues and join the new Party of the Democratic Platform," Chubais, a member of the group's Coordinating Council, said in an interview.

Chubais' comments were in response to an "open letter" from the policy-making Central Committee, still largely in the hands of party conservatives, which blasted the Democratic Platform and awakened fears of a purge.

"We have concluded that what has taken place is a Ligachev-conservative coup of the party leadership," said Chubais.

A Democratic Platform congress is set for late May but Chubais said the attacks by the Central Committee might force the group to act more quickly.

Platform leaders put its numbers at well over 100,000 including many of the most prominent Soviet reformers, and chapters are active in 100 Soviet cities.

Democratic Platform members in the past have said they did not seek an immediate split in the party and would instead fight to take control of the congress, which elects the Central Committee and adopts social and economic policy.

The open letter, however, suggested the leadership was seeking to control the party ranks ahead of the crucial congress.

"It is important that delegates to the Congress are convinced Communists," it said.

The reading of the letter — repeated on television on Wednesday — follows recent attacks on reformers within the party by Ligachev and other conservatives.

Ligachev Sunday accused the leadership under President Mikhail Gorbachev of weakness towards the radicals and demanded it get rid of them immediately.

"There are forces in the party that oppose socialism," Ligachev

said.

In Byelorussia, a hot-bed of conservatism, the leadership has already announced a purge of Democratic Platform members.

Chubais told Reuters he had been expelled from his local party organisation Tuesday.

"Any transformation of the Communist Party has come to an end. It cannot be transformed and those of us who have no illusions must act energetically and quickly," he said.

Democratic Platform, whose leadership includes populist Boris Yeltsin, historian Yuri Afanasev and economist Gavril Popov, has been debating since its formation in January whether to break with the National Party and form a Social Democratic Party.

If a split occurs, it could be more serious than the break with the Baltic parties because it likely would take a small layer of the most progressive party members from across the Soviet Union, thereby forming a nationwide opposition.

China closes border cities; travellers report deaths

PEKING (R) — China has closed several towns in its northwest frontier region to foreigners amid unconfirmed reports of bloody riots between Muslim ethnic minorities and Chinese.

A Xinjiang region spokesman, contacted by telephone from Peking, Wednesday gave the first official confirmation that Kashgar and other oasis cities along the old silk road had been closed to foreigners.

He dismissed as "rumour" Western media reports that riots had broken out last week between Islamic minorities and Chinese in a town near Kashgar and that troops sent to quell them had killed around 50 people.

However, the April 4 edition of the official *Xinjiang Daily*, reaching Peking Wednesday, reported a crackdown on separatist activities in the region.

It said the Communist Party had "comprehensively suppressed an illegal organisation bent on splitting the unity of the

motherland" in Yili, an area along the border with the Soviet Union.

Accounts of riots near Kashgar could not be independently confirmed but, if accurate, described the worst violence seen in China since troops crushed democracy demonstrations in Peking last June with heavy loss of life.

Xinjiang's mountains and deserts, covering an area three times the size of France, are home to about 15 million people. Half are ethnic minorities sharing the Islamic faith with Muslims living across a long border with the Soviet Union's recently rebellious Asian republics.

The fabled silk road city of Kashgar, around which the anti-Chinese riots are reported to have erupted, is some 500 kilometres southwest of the Yili Valley mentioned in the Xinjiang Daily.

The newspaper report did not say where or how the "illegal organisation" operated or how it

was suppressed. The report was the first official indication of unrest in Xinjiang last week.

It blamed the trouble on "hostile foreign forces" and said that education had been strengthened among Communist cadres and the broad masses to heighten vigilance against separatists.

Mohammad, an official at the foreign affairs office in Xinjiang's regional capital Urumqi, told Reuters by telephone that several cities had been closed to foreigners.

"Facilities are very bad now for receiving foreign guests in Kashgar and other cities," Mohammad said. Aksu, Khotan and Kuqa, other Muslim dominated-towns in the west Xinjiang, were also closed but Urumqi was still open.

A Japanese businessman arriving in Peking from Urumqi Wednesday said he had been warned by his driver not to venture into the bazaar area of the city because of "rioting by minority nationalities."

Top U.S. aide meets Aquino

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A senior U.S. official met Wednesday with President Corazon Aquino and said ties between Manila and Washington continue to be strong.

Asst. Secretary of State Richard Solomon was the first senior American official to meet Mrs. Aquino since she had refused to meet Defense Secretary Dick Cheney last February because she was angry about critical reporting of her administration in the U.S. media.

"The fundamental is our support of democracy here and we feel there is a strong basis of shared interest in security cooperation and we look forward to that broader relationship," Solomon told reporters after his hourlong meeting.

The lease on Clark Air Base, the Subic Bay Naval Base and four smaller installations expires next year. Talks on extending the agreement are scheduled to begin on May 14.

Asked for his assessment of U.S.-Philippine ties in view of negative reports about graft and corruption in the Aquino administration, Solomon said: "I think they are basically very solid."

Solomon also said the Soviet military threat was never a primary focus of security cooperation with the Philippines, a former U.S. colony. Some Filipinos have called for a U.S. pullout because of the warning of relations between Moscow and the West.

After an earlier meeting with Philippine Foreign Secretary Raul Manglapus, Solomon said talks on the future of the bases will be "intense."

The Philippines is among the five largest recipients of U.S. economic aid, and several U.S. congressmen have predicted dramatic reductions in assistance if the bases are closed.

In Washington, the White House has announced that the U.S. negotiating panel would be led by Richard L. Armitage, an Asian affairs specialist and for-

mer Defence Department official. Manglapus will be the chief Philippine negotiator.

Any agreement must be approved by two-thirds of the 23-member Senate, where opposition to the bases is strong. Mrs. Aquino has also expressed unhappiness over a \$96-million cut Congress made in the U.S. administration's request of \$360 million to compensate the Philippines for the use of the bases.

Because of the political sensitivity of the bases issue, Filipino officials have described the upcoming session as "exploratory talks," after which they will decide whether to move to formal negotiations.

Solomon said he believed the exploratory talks will lead to formal negotiations. But a senior Filipino official, who is involved in the bases issue, told reporters "that is his (Solomon's) own perception. We can't decide before the exploratory talks."

The official spoke on condition he not be named.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Peacekeepers arrive in Nicaragua

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (AP) — U.N. peacekeeping troops have arrived in Honduras to begin disbanding the Nicaraguan rebels. Meanwhile, the leftist Sandinistas warned there could be renewed fighting. A contingent of 170 Venezuelan paratroopers arrived Tuesday in Honduras, where the rebels, known as contras, have base camps. Their Spanish commander, Gen. Agustin Quesada Gomez, said Venezuela will send a total of 700 soldiers. They will be joined by troops from several other countries. The United Nations Observer Force will supervise the demobilisation in both Honduras and Nicaragua and the destruction of the rebels' U.S.-supplied arms. The contras on Nicaraguan territory are supposed to gather in "safety zones" once the U.N. peacekeeping force can ensure a ceasefire. An estimated 9,000 contras have returned to Nicaragua in recent months, leaving the Honduran camps almost deserted.

7 ethnic ministers quit in Kosovo

BELGRADE (R) — The regional premier and six ethnic Albanian ministers have resigned in Yugoslavia's troubled Kosovo province, the newspaper Borba said Wednesday. Their resignations followed a crackdown by the Republic of Serbia, of which Kosovo is part.

Jaruzelski arrives for Soviet visit

MOSCOW (R) — Polish president Wojciech Jaruzelski arrived Wednesday in the western Ukrainian city of Lvov — once a part of Poland — for the start of an official visit, the Soviet News Agency TASS said. Jaruzelski, here at the invitation of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, arrived as solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa launched his campaign to replace the general as Poland's president. The Communist Party daily Pravda said the visit, and talks between Jaruzelski and Gorbachev, would "promote the development and consolidation of friendly relations between the USSR and Poland."

Tanks deployed in Karachi

KARACHI (R) — Tanks and armoured personnel carriers moved into the Pakistani city of Karachi Wednesday to guard against violence following the death of a leading political activist shot last week. Three tanks and eight armoured personnel carriers took up position not far from the Aga Khan Hospital before a hospital spokesman announced that activist Najib Ahmed had died. Ahmad, a leading figure in the student wing of the ruling Pakistan People's Party (PPP), had been on a life support system since being shot last Friday. At least 19 people died after the attack sparked a weekend of violence between PPP supporters and the Mohajir National Movement (MQM) that dominates this port city of eight million people. Troops and paramilitary rangers have been patrolling Karachi since Monday to try to contain violence, fuelled by the easy availability of Kalashnikov assault rifles in Pakistan.

Hungary reports rise in refugee influx

BUDAPEST (R) — Almost 200 refugees a day are crossing into Hungary from Romania's Transylvania region, up five times since ethnic clashes killed three people last month, the daily Magyar Hírlap reported Wednesday. The Hungarian media called the clashes between Romanian nationalists and ethnic Hungarians in the Transylvanian town of Tîrgu Mureş a pogrom. Magyar Hírlap said that before the clashes only 30 to 40 refugees had crossed the border each day. More than two million of Romania's population are ethnic Hungarians and many live in Transylvania, a former Hungarian territory. Hungary has complained that Romania's new leaders are dragging their feet over restoring human and minority rights to the ethnic Hungarians, who were exposed to severe assimilation policies under the late Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu. Most of the new arrivals are intellectuals who feel compelled to leave Romania for their children's security, Magyar Hírlap said.

Nepalese king withdraws from active participation in politics

KATHMANDU, Nepal (Agencies)

— King Birendra has withdrawn from active participation in politics and wants the government to heal the wounds caused by a crackdown on Nepal's pro-democracy movement, Foreign Minister Pushpa Rana said Wednesday.

Meanwhile, state-run radio announced that all charges would be dropped against activists arrested since the movement began on Feb. 18. The opposition estimates about 300 political prisoners are in jail.

Rana's statement was the first on the king's role in Nepal's new multiparty system, which Birendra approved Sunday.

Rana said a centrist party and a left-wing coalition continued negotiations on forming a provisional government.

The Nepali Congress Party and the United Left Front said Tuesday they would not participate in the government if the present parliamentary assembly, the Rashtriya Panchayat, was not dissolved.

The two parties led the seven-week pro-democracy campaign that forced Birendra to establish a multiparty system.

Political parties were banned in Nepal 29 years ago when the democratically elected government

headed by the Nepali Congress Party was sacked by Birendra's father, Mahendra. It ended Nepal's only experiment with a Western-style democracy.

The Nepal Congress Party went underground and continued to campaign for multiparty democracy. A left-wing coalition

joined Nepali Congress on Feb. 18, setting off a popular movement supported by academics, doctors, engineers, pilots and peasants.

A government crackdown Friday left at least 200 people dead, witnesses said. The government said 10 people were killed and 107 injured.

"For one and a half months a period of harshness, of great casualties, of great loss of lives has gone through this country. We want to heal these wounds to soothe anybody's feelings wherever they are buried," Rana said.

Rana said the king, by deleting a reference to partylessness in the constitution, has "relinquished participation in active politics." But the state-run radio continued to talk to the government as His Majesty's government on Wednesday. In an afternoon news programme, it said "His Majesty's government has decided to withdraw, by Friday all criminal cases against those

arrested during the (pro-democracy) movement."

To a question on the king tolerating criticism in the future, Rana said "freedom of expression has been established... it is more likely that there would be praise of the king."

Under Nepalese law, the press or citizens are not allowed to criticise the institution of monarchy and the royal family, although criticism of the government is permitted.

Birendra, 44, is the heir of the Shah Dynasty that has held the throne since the middle of the 18th century. Many Nepalis, especially illiterate farmers who compromise the bulk of this country's 17 million people, view him as the reincarnation of Hindu god, Vishnu.

Rana has also promised a free press in the Himalayan kingdom. "The ban on all newspapers will be removed. All foreign newspapers can come in. You are free to write whatever you want," Rana told a news conference Tuesday.

The judicial commission will

have the full scope of powers to suggest any kind of punishment on anyone who committed excesses," he said of the probe, which is to be headed by a supreme court judge.

Kashmiri militants kill 2 more hostages

SRINAGAR, India (Agencies)

— Kashmiri militants fighting Indian rule have killed all three men they kidnapped in an effort to free colleagues from jail, police said Wednesday.

The secessionists spectacularly

killed one hostage near Indian Kashmir's police headquarters Tuesday afternoon. Police said the bodies of the two others were found dumped in a Srinagar suburb late Tuesday night.

The two bodies were identified

early Wednesday as those of University of Kashmir Vice-Chancellor Syed Ali Shah Geelani, leader of the Muslim fundamentalist Jemaat-E-Islami Party, which wants Indian-ruled Kashmir to join Pakistan.

On Tuesday, Indian Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh issued the toughest of a long line of statements warning Pakistan it could not win Kashmir without a war and told Indians to "psychologically prepared" for one.

"Our message to Pakistan is

that you cannot get away with taking Kashmir without a war," he told parliament.

Some of the militant groups

were re-united and independent Kashmir. Others want to join Pakistan.

About 100 Indian army trucks carrying an estimated 1,000 soldiers in battle uniforms were seen moving into Srinagar Wednesday.

Pilots recall Battle of Britain

LONDON (AP) — The aircraft

that fought in the Battle of Britain are ready again, with the crackle of gunfire and the voice of wartime leader Sir Winston Churchill on recordings to remember it all 50 years ago.

"We had to fight the Germans and that was it. We were all young and we had no idea that we were making history," said one-time Spitfire pilot Desmond Sheen at a preview Tuesday of the largest exhibition of the anniversary year.

The former flyer and other survivors of the airmen whom Churchill called "the few" wandered around their old aircraft and those of their German en-

emies at the Royal Air Force (RAF) Museum at Hendon in north London.

From Wednesday through Oct.

31, visitors to "the Battle of Britain experience" can get some idea of what those combats in the sky must have been like over the four months from July through October 1940. A Hurricane and a Spitfire face a Messerschmitt 109, Heinkel 111 and Junkers 87 Stuka divebomber.

Sheen, 72, an Australian from Canberra who was twice shot down, once went into action three times on one day from Beggin Hill Airfield in Kent as the Germans swept in from the captured fields of northeast

France.

"The German fighter pilots were better trained than we were because they had seen action in the Spanish Civil War and their tactics were better, too," he said in an interview.

"We had not been trained to attack fighters, only bombers, because the Air Ministry did not think that German bombers would have fighter escorts."

Spitfire pilot Maurice Pocock, a Briton who was 20 in 1940, said he trained in 1938 after seeing a newspaper advertisement that said: "Learn to fly free."

He recalled the Spitfire as an "incredible aeroplane — it had so much power."

Study reports link between job stress and heart changes

CHICAGO (AP) — Job stress can lead to high blood pressure and cause potentially dangerous physical changes in the heart, according to a new study of male workers.

The findings are based on a study of 215 men ages 30 to 60 at seven work sites in New York City, including a stock-brokerage firm, private hospital and garbage collection facility, researchers wrote in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.

Job strain resulted